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21st Century Hotel

Graham Vickers



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Laurence King Publishing



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Introduction

'The Station Hotel?... It's a building of small architectural merit built for some unknown purpose at the turn of the century. It was converted into a hotel by public subscription. I stayed there once myself as a young man. It has a reputation for luxury that baffles the most undemanding guest.'

Dr. Prentice in *What The Butler Saw* by Joe Orton.

The phrase '21st-century-hotel design' inevitably has a touch of the futuristic about it, something light years away from Joe Orton's ominously recognizable Station Hotel. True, we are already living in that twenty-first century, but there remains a sense of impersonal progress about the phrase, almost as though hotel design strides ahead and those of us who actually stay in hotels must somehow try to keep up with the trends. In fact, the exact opposite is true. Hotels have never been so earnestly responsive to the Zeitgeist – or at least what hotel operators, owners, developers and designers perceive to be the Zeitgeist. How else can we explain the latest trends in hotel design, which at one extreme increasingly blur the border between lodging, lifestyle, refuge and living theatre, and at the other still seek continue to reinvent the more discreet manners and style of the grand hotels of the past?

This book seeks to explore some of the latest trends and ideas in a sector that has often experienced some difficulty in finding appropriate descriptive terms for the many different shades of hotel experience on offer all over the world. Part of this difficulty derives directly from the worldwide nature of business travel and tourism. Although local notions of luxury in Mexico City are not necessarily the same as those in Manhattan, now that international travel has homogenized our expectations of comfort and service, it is often left to international 'design', in the broadest sense of the word, to add the distinction, variety and shading that local manners would once have imposed, and to project the hotel's image into a market place that now embraces the borderless Internet.

Trends are much harder to pin down than might be imagined. The practising experts – designers, architects, developers and owners – who might be considered to be the most involved and therefore the most informed observers of hotel design, usually turn out to have a vested interest, and seek to extrapolate

from their own latest venture evidence that this is indeed the exact shape of things to come. Perhaps more unguardedly revealing is the wealth of promotional copy generated by the marketing companies whose task it is to sell certain types of new hotel to the public. Someone once remarked, after a disastrous gastronomic tour of the United States, that he now knew the one thing that American restaurants did really well: the menu. Similarly, the overripe *cartes du jour* issuing from those who market particular kinds of hotel seem intent upon making them sound like Lourdes, Shangri-La and Eldorado all rolled into one. The chasm between promise and reality is ludicrous but in certain cases pretence and pretension may be camouflaged, or at least diminished, by interior design or architecture of considerable quality.

What then does this tell us? That there seems to be a growing public appetite for hotels masquerading as health farms and spiritual retreats and that some quite distinguished hotel designers are cheerful accomplices in fashionable bids to realize them. It tells us why every other hotel must now have its spa, a word suddenly divested of its true meaning and commercially re-coined by the hotel industry to mean any sort of indoor water feature with a press agent. It tells us, too, that any hotel fortunate enough to be surrounded by dramatic natural beauty would do well to investigate every local peak, crag and rill for regional evidence of spiritual history and then promptly install a totemic crystal energy chamber before publicizing itself as a time-honoured retreat for burnt-out movers and shakers.

More interestingly, these excesses have filtered down to make more sober health and fitness facilities (often with their vaguely defined overtones of 'well-being' and 'purification') *de rigueur* at almost all new hotels, cutting across every category with the exception of those budget establishments unable to provide any non-essential services at all.

Looking Back, Looking Forward

What of those categories? The main ones adopted in this book are admittedly loose groupings but also, one hopes, helpful ones. The idea of reinterpreting tradition is an enduring and fascinating one, calling for very precise readings of contemporary perspectives on the past. Every age throws up popular culture versions of a past period. To take just one example, an epic eleven-part 1980s UK television version of *Brideshead Revisited* fixed the visual and social manners of inter-war British aristocracy for a whole generation and, incidentally, still exerts its influence today, leading a London hotelier to describe his new establishment as *Brideshead Revisited* meets *Sex and the City*. This is a cultural get-together about which one feels Evelyn Waugh might have had something to say, despite the fact that it is the television series not the novel that is being referred to. In short, tradition is a media-mediated moveable feast from which the passing moment picks and chooses.

The hotels featured in the *Traditional Reinterpretations* section of this book can therefore be seen to be reinventing very selective elements from the built past for a modern consumer. This consumer's visual sophistication is certainly greater than ever before, but he or she is also more heavily influenced by a wealth of manipulated images of the past that have been created by film and television. Tradition, or the illusion of it, may bring reassurance but people also want the manners of the past to be invisibly blended with the benefits of today; they are certainly smart enough to know that a Las Vegas' desert recreation of Venice is a joke and not a reinterpretation. To cater for such a clientele, designers and architects must avoid pastiche and create, instead, a much subtler synthesis of tradition.

Mass Appeal

By definition most mainstream hotels have always been more concerned with reflecting style rather than actually setting it. However, today even the mainstream cannot afford to fall too far behind when it comes to design credibility. *Mainstream Experiments*, therefore, considers some hotels that have sought to combine the established image of the business, tourist or luxury hotel with fresh design thinking that unmistakably hooks them into the spirit of the times without alienating guests who may still seek the familiar reassurance – and sometimes the omnipresent corporate-style hallmark – of the trusted hotel chain.

Here, the prevailing trend seems to be one of trying to square the circle between corporate control and a more informal, independent-looking presence in the market place. Much of the evidence suggests that the balance will tip in favour of loosely branded individual identities as the big chains start to ape Ian Schrager's now legendary recipe for success: buying up existing hotels that have been under-marketed or under-branded and

using well-judged design to help them to shed their faceless images in favour of an attractive new variety of carefully managed individualism.

Oddballs and Auteurs

No such balancing acts trouble either the designer hotel or the kind of hotel that has been conceived for a unique purpose or founded upon an attention-grabbing gimmick. *Designer Hotels* deals with seven design experiments that can be further subdivided.

Manhattan's Soho House benefits from the attentions of a designer, Ilse Crawford, who is herself something of a minor jet-set celebrity. The result is an almost perfect synthesis of real visual style and celebrity buzz, a latter-day equivalent of the rather more austere cachet once enjoyed by, say, Boston's Parker Hotel when Charles Dickens used to stay there. Today, no one wants to stay at a hotel where some long-dead famous person once lodged, if only because the place's corresponding antiquity is likely to raise grave doubts about things like plumbing and the telecommunications. What trendy, up-to-the-minute guests really want to hear is that famously fussy divas like Diana Ross or Barbra Streisand occupied their hotel of choice just last month.

For those who like their *avant-garde* design undiluted, HI Hotel in Nice typifies what happens when a designer is given an unconditional licence to reinvent the possibilities of a hotel. Staying at this establishment is not for the faint-hearted but rather for those who want to align themselves with modish experiments in organizing living space with surreal adventures in room role-reversal or other demanding hospitality experiences. Most of these 'experiments' are unlikely to be welcomed by a weary businessman who is simply looking for a bar that doesn't resemble a James Bond film set and a bed that doesn't turn into a bath.

Some premises resist the attentions of even the most dedicated designer, as an old American Legion building in Paris illustrates. Andrée Putman, past mistress of the Big Hotel Design Push of the 1980s, has certainly done enough to make this old building into a new hotel with a certain touch of class but conservation considerations limited her interventions, perhaps more than she would have liked. Putman's peer in the 80s designer revolution was Philippe Starck whose unmistakable stamp can be seen all over a venerable San Francisco hotel, also featured in this chapter. Here, though, the treatment is unexpectedly Post Modern and the book's only example of what is now seen as a rather passé style, saved by Starck's continuing ability to invest his arch quotations from the past with real quality, style and wit as well as a welcome sense of the unexpected.

Original Ideas spans two areas of activity: serious purpose and playful theming. By definition, each hotel that is dealt with in this section needs to be discussed

on its own terms, but what general lesson, if any, can we draw from the one-off hotel? When the starting point is the rational one of a design that aims to address a unique set of circumstances, probably none. But when the Unique Selling Proposition is an assumed one, it usually has something to do with the burgeoning idea of the hotel as sort of fantasy camp.

Want to get married in an ice palace? Fancy the erotic literature suite of a hotel tricked out like a library? Feel like being born again in a stylized Tyrolean retreat? If so, then you are probably the sort of person who feels more comfortable with a leisure experience that has been carefully branded by someone else. Depending on your point of view, this can be a potentially disquieting idea, not altogether unrelated to the notion of dubbing canned laughter onto the soundtrack of a television show in order to tell audiences when they ought to find something funny. But even when the guests take such hotels less seriously than the hoteliers do, the underlying trend spills over into other, less obviously 'original' hotel concepts. Even a modest (if inventive) reinterpretation of an old budget hotel in downtown Tokyo now offers to provide its guests with 'many answers to the question how to live'. There is a specific cultural undertow that can be seen at work here that, whether overtly or subliminally, increasingly seeks to align a hotel stay with theatre, therapy or even treatment.

Historically, of course, there was always an element of this in the stereotypical Grand Hotel; with its sweeping staircases, lavish restaurants and theatrical public spaces, it was a place for society people to see and be seen. The difference was that there was no themed agenda, no communal psychological purpose and no expectation of anything other than a glittering upscale setting for social dramas. Today, however, the dominant trend is for themed hotels to provide not only the drama but the setting as well.

Building the Dream

It is also true, though, that this growth of the themed hotel experience has been stimulated by factors more pragmatic than psychosocial nuances. The global economic cycle will always condition the amount of new building taking place at a given time and a recent shortage of new-build hotels has necessarily pushed hotel design activity more into the province of the interior designer – who may be asked or tempted to create dramatic themes – than the architect. In addition to this, stringent planning regulation can place considerable restrictions upon the design possibilities of any new hotel that does get built, further shifting the onus of making a strong and distinctive visual statement upon interior design.

Yet common sense tells us that the best hotel design will always be holistic: the building envelope will make the major design statement and, with luck, the interior

will follow it through. Making the structure the starting point can therefore put the whole design process into a more leisurely time frame, militating against the kind of excesses that come from short-term fashion-led thinking and rapid execution. This can be a benefit from the point of view of restraint but may prove a disadvantage if the business plan demands a brisker timetable. In the best cases, good architecture may bring a level of quality to hotel design that nothing else can. Thus, *Architectural Significance* draws together some exemplary hotel projects where the building sets the agenda and interaction between interior and exterior is of exceptional interest.

A new Radisson hotel for the city of Glasgow might also have qualified for inclusion in *Mainstream Experiments* but it is its architectural impact that is so strong as to provide the primary focus of interest. Here, a whole design approach is flagged by the building itself, which successfully juggles with a range of practical issues and restrictions to create a strong statement reflecting something of the spirit of Glasgow and its history without ever being overly reverential or resorting to pastiche. The boldness of this particular piece of hotel architecture has also attracted some other good designers to create facilities inside as well as determining the architects' own treatment of the internal public spaces. Only the standardized, 'cookie-cutter' Radisson guest room design remains untouched by the inventive spirit of the building.

Eva Jiricna's Hotel Josef in Prague is an exceptionally satisfying hotel building, respectful of its surroundings, light in its visual references and very far removed from the sort of hotel that wants to rent out a lifestyle to its guests. Meanwhile, the elaborate architectural story behind Austria's Parkhotel is worth a small book of its own, but even the shortest account reveals how architectural restitution and a proper regard for site and history can result in the most surprising and enjoyable contemporary hotel design solution. In Mexico City, an old industrial building arms itself against an abrasive locale with a stunning new glass outer skin. In Rome, a new hotel building tries to elevate its run-down surroundings simply by being there. In São Paulo, a master architect with a bold agenda uses giant curved building blocks to illustrate how a hotel might look if it didn't have to look like a hotel. And, in what would once have been called the American West's Indian country, a spa complex with spiritual and mystical aspirations gets an architectural treatment that takes an insubstantial agenda very seriously.

Without exception, these architectural solutions are solving problems that are way over and above the normal ones that attend the design of any building: they are giving solid form, not a coat of paint, to a hotelier's dream. Whether it falls to the architects themselves or to others to flesh out the interior, in most cases the best possible start has been made.

Hotels for Consumers

As indicated earlier, hotel operators, owners, developers and designers seem never to have been quite so earnestly responsive to the spirit of the times... or at least what they understand to be the spirit of the times. Certainly, at the start of the 21st century, our tastes are changing faster than ever. Lifestyles, cars, clothes, consumer products and the media shift and transform their complexion almost as fast as the digital technology that increasingly underpins them and most other aspects of 21st-century life.

Hotels have joined the fray and, despite the occasional example where residential rooms and suites have been installed in order to offset the financial unpredictability of hotel room rentals, the modern hotel seems, in general, to be in the throes of acquiring the same kind of transitory permanence that is already enjoyed by theatres, cinemas and restaurants. This is to say that the institution endures but its ever-changing menu of experiences on offer is intended to keep it fresh and ensure repeat business.

The days when people would return, year after year, to the same hotel in the same vacation resort precisely because it was unchanging now seem very distant. So too does the notion of the permanent hotel guest who maintains a room or a suite in perpetuity instead of a regular home. In the Coen Brothers' movie *Barton Fink*, set in the 1940s, the East Coast playwright hero arrives in a daze at the Hotel Earle, the sort of Los Angeles hotel one would not wish on one's worst enemy. At reception he is presented with a register to sign and a baffling

question to answer: '...are you a tranz or a rez?' This means is he registering as a transient or a resident, the bell captain explains. The hotel's motto reads 'Hotel Earle: A Day or a Lifetime'. He does not know what to put; his stay will be indefinite.

Today, the implied question, tranz or rez, becomes ever less relevant to the hotel experience. The hotel as home from home, just like the hotel as temporary lodging, is no longer the automatic way we think of hotels or the way hotels think of themselves. Some may still fulfil these roles but that is not where the key to commercial success lies. Tourism is one of the world's fastest-growing industries and, as a result of this, hotels are becoming destinations in themselves. A big designer name can still guarantee column inches in the world's press and, to some extent, all hotels are now getting into show business; their guests, neither tranz nor rez, are instead sophisticated consumers of experiences: plays, movies, meals, hotel stays.

Quite apart from the role of star designer as publicity magnet, the role of design itself has now become central to defining, shading and colouring the continually shifting choice of what hotels offer us. All the signs are that this process is here to stay and that it will continue to be the designer who provides the vital connecting tissue between the ambitions of the hotel developer and the dreams of the consumer. That consumer, unlike the baffled guests at Orton's Station Hotel, is anything but undemanding and can not only tell the difference between bogus luxury and the real thing, but also appreciate and enjoy many intermediary shades of hospitality experience as well.

1 Traditional Reinterpretations

Few 21st-century hotel guests would be satisfied with the standards of hospitality that prevailed 50 years ago, and yet a popular appetite for the trappings of the past endures. This may show itself in a variety of ways: in pastiches of antique design and decoration; in the notion of old-style deferential service; or in the sort of hotel that embodies a quality and style that exceeds the standards its guests normally enjoy at home. If this sounds out of step with contemporaneous trends, where hotels become fantasy camps, style clubs or health farms, it should be remembered that the traditionalism being evoked is of a type largely informed by popular culture, not historical record. Thus a hotel based on the image of the classic English country house can still boast its chic spa and health bar (features as incongruous in a real 18th-century English country house as a mechanical bull) without raising an eyebrow. Yet reinventions of more recent hotel traditions – the airport hotel, the business hotel and the cheap-but-stylish city centre hotel – can stimulate great design ingenuity, often revealing a shrewd awareness of the perennial value of blending the reassurances of yesterday with the changing tastes of today.

The Ritz-Carlton

Miami, USA 2003

Architects: Nichols Brosch Sandoval & Associates Inc

Interior Design: Howard Design Group

Reinterpreting tradition can often be fraught with dangers – an authentic, original hotel design can all too easily become an empty exercise in style, lacking any real quality beyond that of pastiche. The designers and architects of the newly opened Ritz-Carlton in South Beach, Miami, however, were fortunate enough to be working with a tradition that lent itself particularly well to modern reinvention. The golden age in Miami was the relatively recent 1950s and its signature tradition was a stylish, *moderne* celebration of Floridian seaside leisure. The architect of the original de Lido Hotel, built in 1953, was Morris Lapidus, a Russian émigré whose youthful enthusiasm for theatrical set design eventually evolved into a career designing retail stores and, from the 1940s onwards, hotels and apartments. Miami Beach became Lapidus's professional playground with the de Lido perfectly exemplifying his contribution to a local variant on *Art Moderne*: Miami Modern or Mi-Mo, which was characterized by curves, sweeping lines, pastel accents and joyful motifs.

Architects Nichols Brosch Sandoval & Associates Inc and designers the Howard Design Group have managed to preserve many of the original features of the de Lido Hotel for the Ritz-Carlton makeover. These include the spectacular, black terrazzo floors and a curved wall of polished cherrywood with inlaid and polished, domed light fixtures. If the original *moderne* lines were obliquely inspired by marine imagery, the new design of the 375 guest rooms makes a more overt reference to the staterooms of a luxury liner. Most of them feature colour schemes of nautical blue, spruce green and burnished gold, while the public spaces continue the theme with glass and polished aluminium railings that wind sinuously through the interior. The obligatory European-style quotations include a giant oval rug, with a design based on the metalwork motifs of French *maitre ferronnier* Gilbert Poillerat, and contemporary Venetian glass chandeliers.

Any modern reinterpretation of a traditional hotel must also find ways of incorporating less traditional but currently fashionable elements into it. The Ritz-Carlton has achieved this by buying into the growing trend for making both art and health facilities part of the hotel offer. Its multi-million dollar art collection shrewdly mixes nostalgia (a recreation of the de Lido's original giant mural) with pastiche (modern artworks from Latin American and European artists 'inspired by the *Art Moderne* era') and prestigious originals (a large Miró etching is proudly displayed in the lower lobby).

RIGHT

The lobby establishes The Ritz-Carlton's curvaceous theme, Miami Modern curves and celebratory motifs.

A curved cherrywood wall, studded with domed sconces, draws the visitor through the lobby.

BELOW RIGHT

This archive shot of Lapidus's 1950s design illustrates how the spirit of the original has been retained in the reinterpretation of it.



Incorporated into The Ritz-Carlton is also the La Maison de Beauté Carita Spa, a 1,486 square metre (16,000 square foot) facility that again revisits the 1950s aesthetic with its stainless steel water wall, Italian mosaic-tiled shallow pool, Venetian stucco walls and – an unusual feature – compressed bamboo floors.

All in all, Nichols Brosch Sandoval & Associates Inc and the Howard Design Group have steered a very astute design course. The half-century that separates Miami traditional from Miami contemporary may only be a relatively brief span of years but public tastes and expectations have changed radically in that period. So, in reviving a recognizable design style without sacrificing either quality or commercial viability, the designers can claim a considerable success here.



1 TRADITIONAL REINTERPRETATIONS



ABOVE

Nautical imagery dominates throughout The Ritz-Carlton, with guest rooms that resemble staterooms and external rails that reinforce the idea of being afloat rather than ashore.

RIGHT

This archive shot shows the original hotel entrance, complete with its sinuous logotype and offset guest room windows.





ABOVE

A hotel surrounded by shades of blue. The Florida sky, the Atlantic Ocean and the hotel pool combine to give The Ritz-Carlton in South Beach a luminous setting.

Four Seasons Hotel

Tokyo, Japan 2002

Architects: Nikken Sekki

Interior Design: Yabu Pushelberg

The extensive Four Seasons family of hotels can fairly claim an established reputation for luxury, if not opulence. Just how far you can push a well-established hotel name, without dislocating its brand perception, has been skilfully demonstrated by George Yabu and Glenn Pushelberg with their interior design of a hotel-within-an-office block. The office block in question, the Pacific Century Palace Tower, is a 31-storey glass building located in Tokyo's dynamic Marunouchi district, a matrix of local transportation, political and commercial energy. It is situated close to Tokyo Station, the Imperial Palace and the Ginza shopping district.

Designed by the Takenaka Corporation (a large Japanese design and build company) with architect Nikken Sekki, the Pacific Century Palace Tower imposed stringent limitations on the hotel that was to be slotted in between its third and seventh floors. These floors had originally been intended for apartments and the conversion to hotel use was only decided on after construction had begun. The challenge for Yabu Pushelberg was to interpret the Four Seasons' traditional brand values and atmosphere in a constrained format that would permit only 57 guest rooms and public areas in an area that could never be described as spacious. They responded to this with a solution that was based not on the familiar scale of a traditional grand hotel, but rather on the model of a private club, where the notion of small, linked salons was not inimical to exclusivity and prestige. Where they encountered a long, narrow rectilinear space the design solution was not to exploit this sudden expanse for its scale but instead to break it up, which resulted in the compact, contiguous spaces of lobby, lounge, bar and restaurant. 'The design is not about one or two grandiose rooms,' notes Glenn Pushelberg, 'but rather about a series of well-executed small spaces that hold together well.'

Other obstacles to overcome included a very mixed array of views, including an unlovely aspect onto the bullet train tracks of the nearby station. Also, the sometimes intrusive monumental structural columns, demanded by law in a country that is prone to earthquakes, posed a challenge of scale in the context of small, salon-like rooms, as did the narrow distance between the guest room windows and the elevator shafts, another legacy of a building primarily designed for offices or apartments. Yabu Pushelberg, however, succeeded in negotiating most of these problems with considerable ingenuity. Elegant translucent screens mask the undesirable views and the huge columns are frequently absorbed into clean, curvilinear walls. As a result of this, each room is largely customized, which has the effect of giving an ongoing variety of experiences to returning guests while affording the designers the flexibility of being able to respond to different spatial challenges and views room by room.

The traditional expectation of a ground-floor lobby with guest rooms above is reversed here, with the rooms located on the four floors below the lobby, bar and restaurant. So what remains of tradition, you may ask? Perhaps it is something in the experience rather than the lineaments. 'This is a modern take on a Japanese *ryokan*' says George Yabu, referring to a traditional type of Japanese inn that has, in recent times, been reinterpreted in many different commercial formats. If the traditional spirit of the *ryokan* was to provide a level of spiritual refuge as well as physical shelter, then perhaps the Four Seasons Tokyo has triumphed in reinventing traditional luxury after all. Even if this tradition is not the familiar Western one, exemplified by the Four Seasons brand, it is still an honourable one that responds to its stringent context with creativity, wit and style.

RIGHT

A bathroom with a view. Blinds provide privacy although the floor-to-ceiling windows do seem to encourage guests to risk charges of exhibitionism while contemplating the vibrant Marunouchi district as they soak in the tub.



LEFT

The entrance to the Pacific Century Palace Tower. Here, the Four Seasons Hotel, a hotel-within-an-office block, is cleverly sandwiched between the third and seventh floors.







LEFT

At times, the contrast in scale between the structural elements of the tower and the hotel's internal spaces cannot be disguised, only minimized by the careful use of colour and finish.



LEFT

Japan is a country prone to earthquakes so the Pacific Century Palace Tower's massive obligatory supporting columns sometimes had to be carefully camouflaged by the designers.

RIGHT

Yabu Pushelberg's overall approach of linking small public spaces together to suggest an exclusive club finds an echo in the layout of some of the guest rooms.





The Grove

Hertfordshire, England, UK 2003

Architects: Fitzroy Robinson; Scott Brownrigg Taylor

Interior Design: Fox Linton Associates; Collett Zarzycki

The Grove, set in 1.2 square kilometres (0.46 square miles) of private parkland, was originally the eighteenth-century Hertfordshire mansion of the Earls of Clarendon. It was built as a country house, a world away from London both in style and distance, but thanks to improved transport links and its proximity to London, it soon became a popular weekend retreat. Two centuries later and it is now hailed as 'London's country estate', where city meets country and classic meets contemporary. The Grove is a bold instance of tradition reinvented, a taste of 18th-century style with added modern convenience.

The task of blending a country setting, an aristocratic history and a sense of metropolitan proximity (London is actually 30 kilometres (18 miles away) fell to Martin Hulbert, Design Director of Fox Linton Associates. Fox Linton had previously enjoyed success with their contribution to One Aldwych, a few years earlier, but here they faced a very different challenge. The original mansion, having been extended several times over the years as the Clarendon family status grew, had acquired another addition. A new west wing had been added to accommodate a new lobby, a restaurant and public rooms for parties, meetings and private entertaining.

All of the hotel's 227 guestrooms and suites have modern facilities including plasma-screen TVs and DVD players. The guestrooms in the original mansion are individually designed and retain original architectural features such as open fireplaces. The style cleverly mixes old and new: a giant plasma screen TV may be opposite a Venetian mirror or a piece of contemporary art may hang over an 18th-century chest of drawers. Guestrooms in the West Wing are sleek and contemporary and pursue a slightly different theme, drawing on their proximity to the grounds they overlook. Many open out onto private terraces and Hulbert has cleverly brought the landscape inside by incorporating detailed photographs of leaves onto the Perspex cupboard doors, which are then backlit to dramatic effect.

Presumably this leaf theme does not include any examples of the giant Californian sequoia, although this is the name chosen for the Grove's integrated spa, designed by Collett Zarzycki and featuring twelve treatment rooms, a health bar, two pools (one indoors and mosaic-lined, the other outdoors and sheltered in a walled garden) plus another restaurant – The Stables. Tying many of these style elements together are the

public spaces, notably, in the mansion, a series of drawing rooms that lead guests through décor that grades from dark to light, from midnight blues and black to subtle greys and earth tones.

Hulbert claims that many things influenced the overall design of The Grove's new interior: 'The design – especially in the mansion – was influenced by all that is best about a traditional country house: lovely, textured, rich fabrics that wear well; quality furniture; smells from the garden; vases of flowers everywhere and a relaxed welcome.' This fulsome explanation demonstrates that illusion, sensory association and nostalgia play a very real part in many people's view of English traditions. By adding a modern twist to this, Fox Linton have succeeded in creating a contemporary take on country house living.



LEFT

The Grove walks a well-judged line between pastiche and reinvention. Here, the English country garden setting that gives the hotel its unique appeal and atmosphere is visible through the window of this guest room.

RIGHT

The lobby, with its art pieces, eclectic furniture and contemporary reception desk gives early warning that The Grove offers a bracing mix of the old and the new.



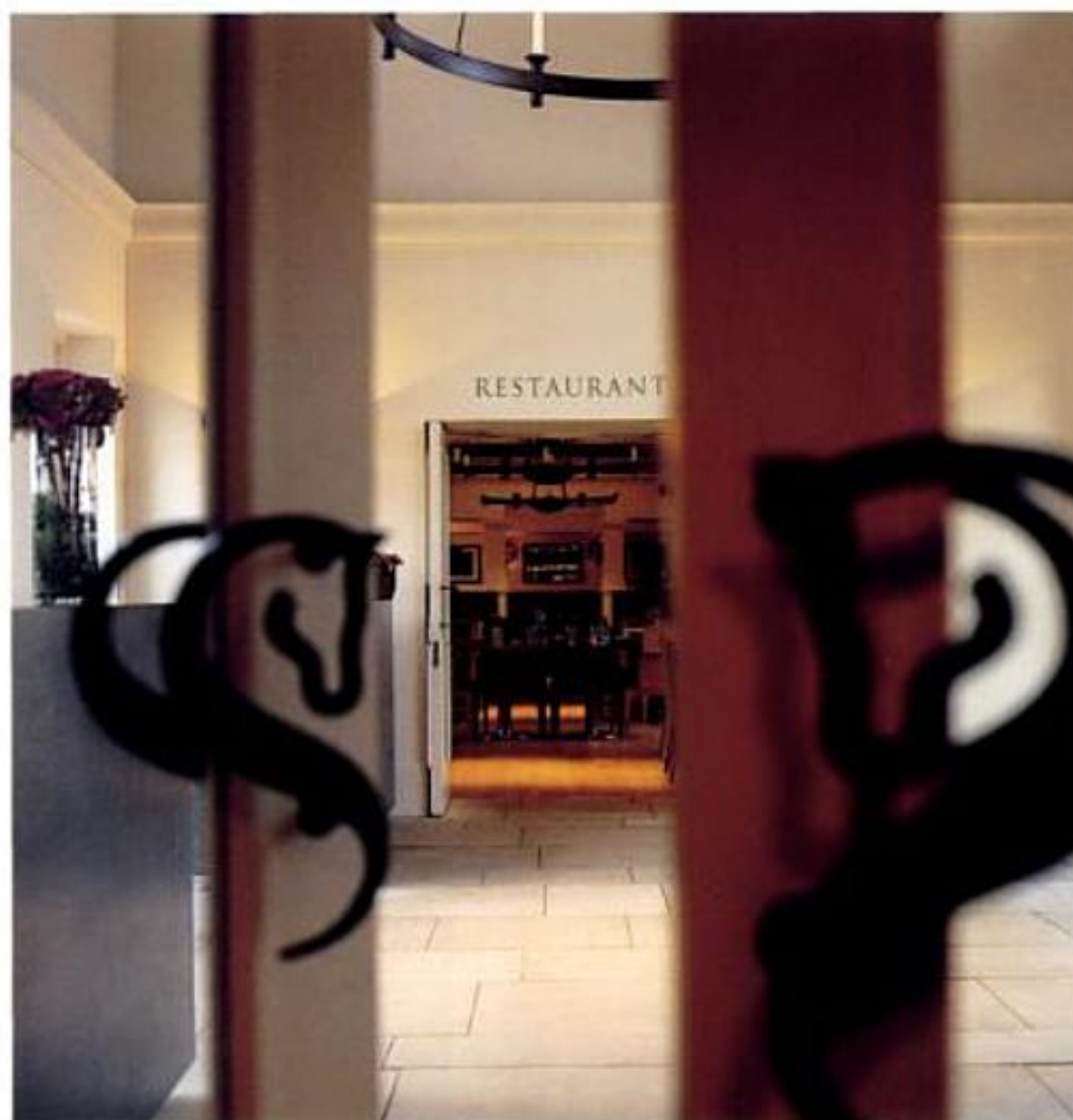


LEFT

The staircase is a perfect evocation of the 18th-century country house that is the nucleus of The Grove. The painting, however, confounds any expectations of ersatz family portraits in oils and offers instead a reminder that this particular exercise in traditional reinvention is also a contemporary hotel.

RIGHT

The seahorse detailing of the door handles typifies the attention to detail that characterizes Fox Linton's interior treatment.





LEFT

The 18th-century Hertfordshire mansion in its English country setting, one of the inspirations for the design of The Grove Hotel's interior.

RIGHT

At The Grove, Fox Linton used a design theme that draws on indigenous trees and leaves for inspiration. In the guest rooms, leaf motifs dominate, while in this lounge a wall mirror sprouts branches and flowers.





ABOVE

The detailing in the spa's indoor swimming pool may evoke a traditional English barn, but the ambience has an almost Eastern flavour of calm and retreat.

RIGHT

One of The Grove's more spacious guest rooms in the new contemporary West Wing.



Andél's Hotel

Prague, Czech Republic 2002

Interior Design: Jestico + Whiles

Reinterpreting design traditions in central Europe can pose a particularly demanding and specialized challenge, especially for a foreign designer. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall, Jestico + Whiles were among the first British offices to undertake projects in the former Czechoslovakia as well as in Latvia and Bulgaria. Their first client was the UK Foreign Office and the projects were for cultural and diplomatic premises. The Czech Republic proved particularly amenable to Jestico + Whiles and the company subsequently opened an office in Prague. However, it was their contributions to One Aldwych and The Hempel hotels in London that recommended the firm to clients WARIMPEX and UBM, who appointed them as the interior designers of a new-build hotel that was to form the social focus of Andél City, a new mixed-use Prague development.

Here, unlike their contributions to One Aldwych and The Hempel, Jestico + Whiles were able to execute the whole of the interior design, including the furniture. This holistic approach was to result in a highly coherent design that acknowledged the spirit – and occasionally the letter – of Bohemian craft traditions. The guest's experience of the 280-room hotel begins with a lobby that encourages relaxation rather than the obligatory encounter with the reception desk. The desk itself, offset in its non-confrontational position, is a monolithic block of stone invisibly raised as if it were

hovering above the floor. A decorative theme based on the Bohemian tradition of glass and metal manufacture and sculpture starts here in the lobby. In its central zone a floor-to-ceiling curtain of metallic *voile* defines private and semi-private rooms that are appointed with a writing desk, benches and flower displays behind the shimmering translucent curtain with its echoes of a *shoji* screen. A contemporary reworking of the traditional grand hotel *escalier* features stone steps bordered with etched glass walls, and leads to a first-floor business-guest reception desk, also made of glass. Glass is a reoccurring theme in other public and private spaces in the hotel, including the first-floor restaurant.

The 280 guest rooms maintain a general feel of cool luxury. Materials and the thoughtful use of geometric shapes are the means by which a traditional sense of quality is invoked, without resorting to pastiche. The rooms are flooded with light from the floor-to-ceiling windows, while simple furniture in polished lacquer and glass is designed to allow and indeed encourage guests to adjust its positioning or configuration. There is a movable desk in each room with a rotatable sheet of glass for a top that enables the guest to position and align the piece anywhere in the room. It can be a work desk next to a window or be located beneath a wall-mounted mirror and used as a dressing table. Each room has access to the Internet via Ethernet-LAN and a multimedia TV-System and DVD, and the TV is built into a revolving cube-on-cube, which allows viewing from the bed or from the *chaise longue*. The lower glass-fronted cube houses the minibar while another, separate cube can be used as a footrest, a table or even an extension to the seating area. Instead of using conventional tiles, the bathrooms are lined with full-height sheets of white glass while the lavatory and shower are contained within separate enclosures, defined by frameless glass doors.

The public spaces include a conference suite with a full complement of facilities and a design that again emphasizes flexibility. Sliding panels faced with cream leather can be used to subdivide the space into five smaller rooms within the main space. Taken together, the various spaces within Andél's Hotel fully justify the decision to give one design team the whole remit – instead of competition, there is harmony and consistency. More importantly, instead of a theatrical attempt to revive the past, Jestico + Whiles have found a restrained and contemporary way of effortlessly evoking a certain sense of it.



ABOVE

Andél's monolithic reception desk is given an unexpected touch of visual lightness by being invisibly raised above the reception floor. The vertical stripe in the rectilinear composition hints at the visual manners of Czech Modernism.

LEFT

A contemporary reworking of the traditional grand hotel *escalier* features stone steps flanked by etched glass walls.



BELOW

The Bohemian tradition of decorative glass is referenced in the treatment of the restaurant and throughout the hotel.



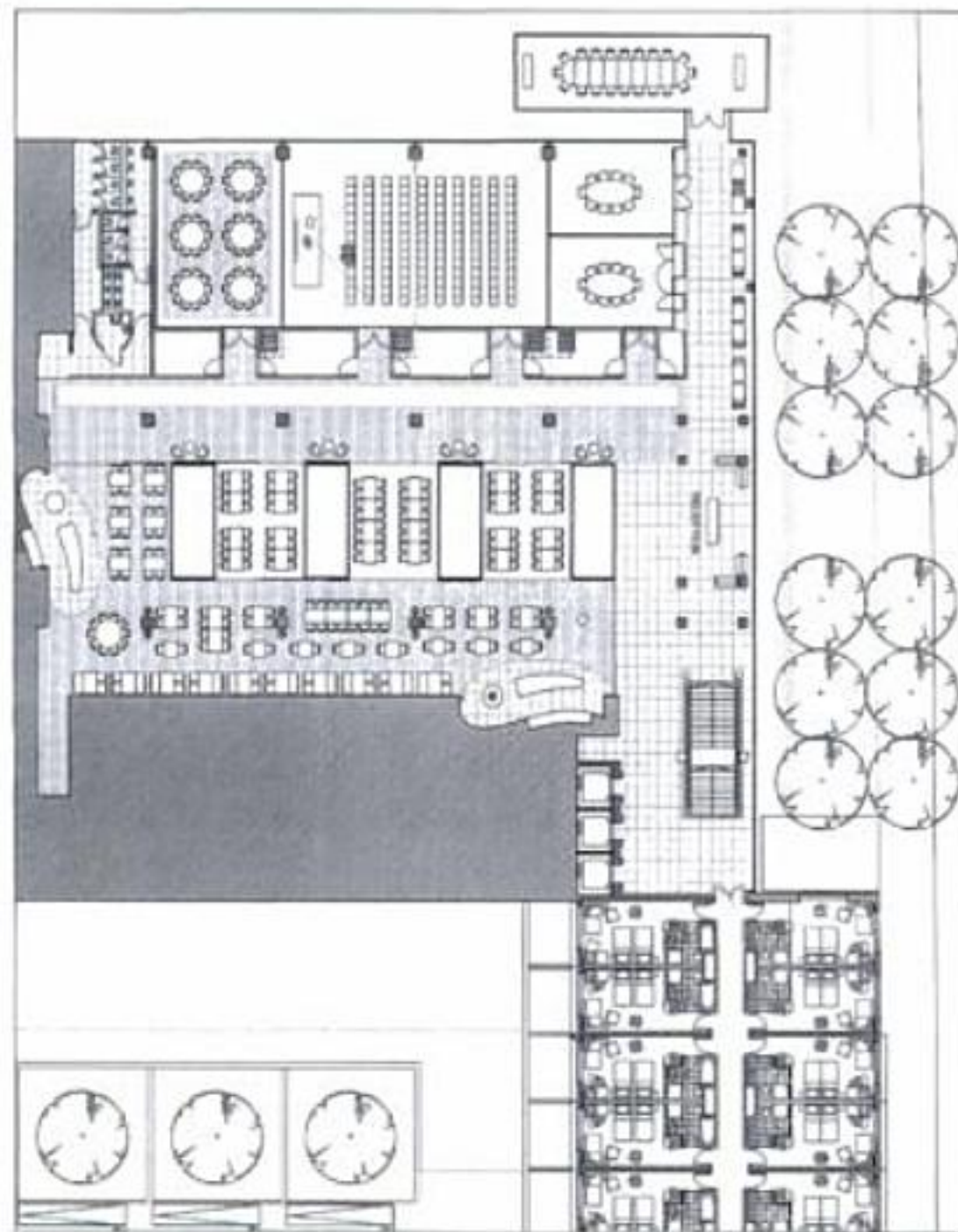




LEFT

The harmony and consistency that makes the design work in this contemporary hotel is clearly evident in the main bar.

1 TRADITIONAL REINTERPRETATIONS



0 5m 10m
15ft 30ft



LEFT

The first floor plan.

RIGHT

The health club bar with its icons of human fitness and a light, airy feel.

BELOW

Health club shower cubicles, with their *moiré* enclosures, introduce an ambiguous visual theme combining concealment and transparency.





1. TRADITIONAL REINTERPRETATIONS

The Sheraton Frankfurt Hotel

Frankfurt, Germany 2002

Architects: JSK International

Interior Design: United Designers Europe Ltd

There are traditions and there are traditions. The late 1960s tradition of routinely decking out sternly rectilinear corporate hotels in dull earth tones was one that persisted for a decade and, in places, sometimes much longer. The thinking was transparent (even if the interiors were often contained by glass so densely smoked that it was nearly opaque): make the place look businesslike but use warm tones to replace the utilitarian greys and whites of the office. Passing years and changing tastes have meant that the 'any-colour-so-long-as-it's-brown' solution dated badly and when a hotel designed in this way managed to survive into the present day, it began to look less like a heroic survivor and more like a bad design joke.

The 1,050-room behemoth that is the Sheraton Frankfurt is just such a hotel. It comprises three towers linked by large groundfloor public spaces and a conference centre in the basement. Adjacent to Frankfurt Airport, the hotel has great strategic value but its deeply discouraging design made a radical rethink vital if it was to retain any commercial appeal in the early twenty-first century. United Designers were called in to rework the public areas and 300 executive guest rooms. They were also asked to integrate a new entrance that connected to a railway station providing a new city centre transport link. This new entrance now sets the tone for the hotel and is the guest's first indication that the old Sheraton has discovered a new spectrum of colours, other than brown. A bright blue corridor, 30 metres (98 foot) long, leads from the rail link to a lobby and reception area that has been dramatically reconfigured, having been stripped right back to the building's concrete shell.

The designers were able to create a new set of linked curvilinear spaces that aided orientation and made initial circulation more logical – steel, glass, stone and dark-stained timber are the dominant materials. A central Winter Garden space encloses various activities, giving access to a café, bar and restaurant, entry to the conference centre in the basement and to a viewing area onto the adjacent airport. This linked environment, dedicated to leisure, welcome and meeting places, sets the tone for all the renewed areas in a hotel whose large capacity is an important asset (a sudden influx of delayed air passengers may need to be catered for) but one that is no longer allowed to overwhelm the experience of arrival.

The 300 newly refurbished executive guest rooms are all located in one tower. These rooms continue

the dark-stained wood theme in the furniture, which is upholstered in deep red and mustard fabrics. Stainless steel light fittings and abstract artwork in every room further reflect a more contemporary notion of executive comfort than the old modular beige sofas and biscuit-coloured carpet tiles. The Sheraton Frankfurt Hotel, without rebuilding, has been reinterpreted as much in an architectural sense as through its décor. The strategic use of light to redefine the big spaces, a significant change in circulation and a softening of the old rectilinear lines all combine to change the bone structure of the hotel, making the introduction of a subtle contemporary palette both more logical and more satisfying.

BELOW

The Sheraton Frankfurt Hotel's new bar with its wall of shimmering stainless steel panels.





ABOVE

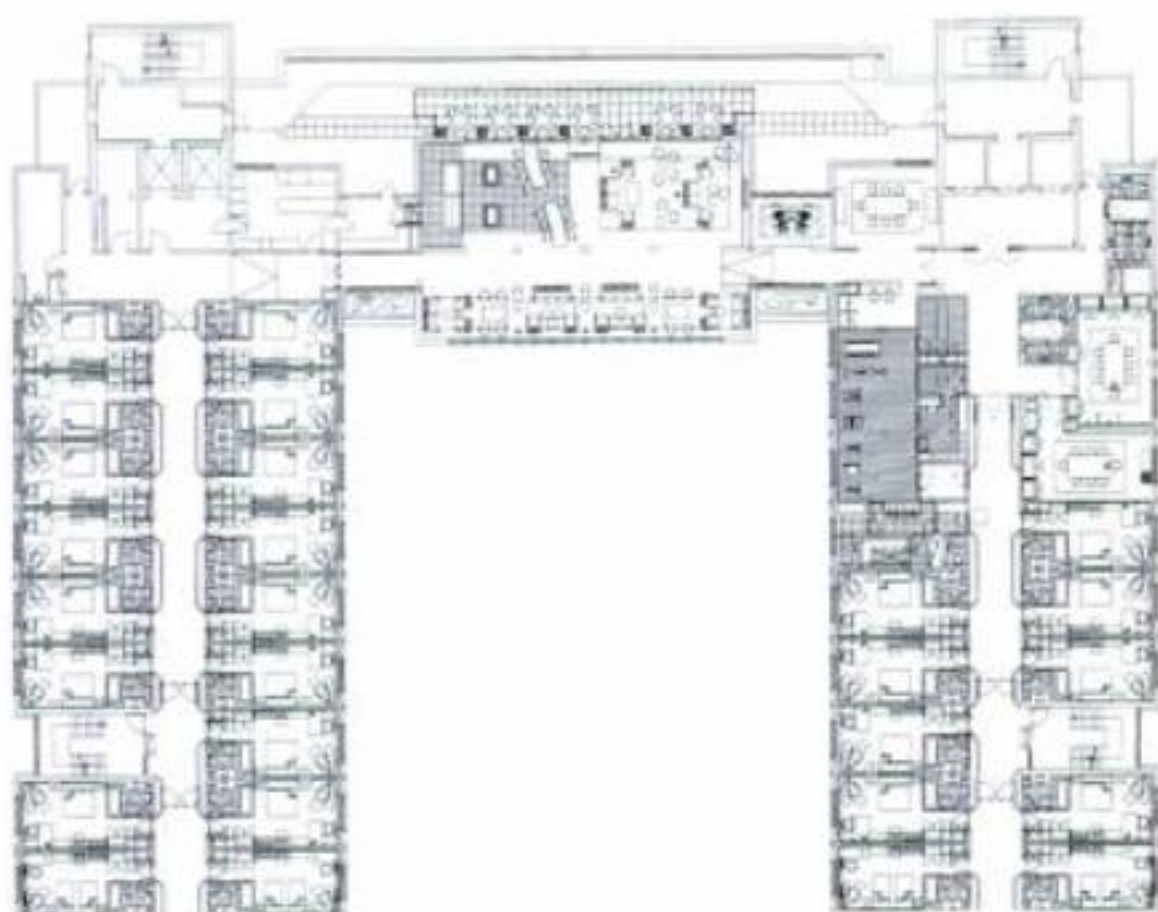
Visually, the new stair and artwork installation are far removed from The Sheraton Frankfurt's previous design scheme, a 1960s throwback to corporate beige and brown.





LEFT

A stylish reception desk has the physical capacity to accommodate a number of business guests, who may all be checking out at the same time. With its new links to the airport encouraging simultaneous arrivals and departures, this is both an elegant and practical feature.



LEFT

A plan showing the ninth floor of the hotel tower – this is the location of the executive rooms that were the first focus of guest room renovation.

RIGHT

The extended lobby introduces natural light into what used to be a smaller space enclosed by smoked glass. This corridor connects the reception area with new transport links.



LEFT

The hotel tower, containing the executive rooms, was the first to be upgraded at The Sheraton Frankfurt. Well-designed and well-appointed work desks form a key feature of each room.





Hart's Hotel

Nottingham, England, UK 2003

Architects: Marsh:Grochowski

Interior Design: Hambleton Decorating Ltd; Stefa Hart

London was not always England's unchallenged style-setter. There was a time when several provincial cities could claim comparable levels of sophistication. However, the city of Nottingham, with a history that evokes mining, D. H. Lawrence, the manufacture of bicycles (Raleigh) and the vague legend of Robin Hood, was rarely seen as being particularly glamorous. The arrival of Hart's Hotel in the centre of the city in 2003 did, though, bring simultaneous touches of class and internationalism to Nottingham and also shook up the traditional concept that people had of a good, small, personal English provincial hotel.

In 1979, Tim Hart had converted a comfortable Victorian house into a country hotel with 15 double bedrooms and a restaurant; this was Hambleton Hall in Rutland, an enduring hotel success story. For his new hotel in Nottingham, Hart commissioned award-winning practice Marsh:Grochowski to build along the exact line of the original Nottingham Castle wall.

'I wanted generous ceiling heights, harmonious proportions in the rooms, and really good ventilation, which would not be mechanical,' says Hart, 'so there are masses of windows you can open.' When the building was complete, Tim Hart handed the interior decoration over to his wife, Stefa, although this was no empty exercise in nepotism. Stefa, daughter of Vladimir Daskaloff who had trained at the Bauhaus, had grown up around the Mediterranean in a world suffused with fine art and the decorative arts. 'Hart's demands simplicity,' Stefa Hart says. 'Painted walls, muted

colours, simple curtains, linear furniture – cool, calm and efficient. This is a modern classic hotel that I hope will still look good in 100 years. I am not only a decorator, but also a hotelier – so I am dedicated to making a hotel work, not only visually but in terms of welcome and comfort for the client.' Unsurprisingly contemporary art is a key feature of the principal rooms at the hotel and there is also a collection of abstract pictures painted by Stefa's father.

The bedrooms include furniture by French designer Philippe Hurel, wool carpets in a tufted two-tone stripe made by Gaskell Carpets in Lancashire to Stefa's own design, beds by Beds RZZZZ of Hemel Hempstead and bed linen (goose down pillows and duvets in Egyptian jacquard cotton linen) from Delbanco & Meyer, London. The now obligatory provision of decent electronic amenities in bedrooms here consists of hi-fi and wide-screen TVs and laptop and mobile phone charging facilities; suites include video players and surround sound systems.

Hart's has brought to this busy Midlands town a stylish hotel with good dining and a European sense of luxury. All this has been achieved by an owner whose success was founded in a far more traditional English establishment. The colour and the art, although they might seem naturally at home in many comparable European cities, here represent a particularly bold touch and demonstrate the valuable role a hotel can play in redefining a city's traditional perceptions of itself and even boosting its sense of self-confidence.



RIGHT

Muted colours, linear furniture and a calm atmosphere characterize the Hart's Hotel approach. Designer Stefa Hart has brought something of her love of Bauhaus principles to the public spaces.

LEFT

The hotel entrance signals a particularly European sense of hotel style in a busy Midlands town.









LEFT

Contemporary art is a key feature of the Hart's Hotel interior, including a collection of abstract paintings by Stefa Hart's father, Vladimir Daskaloff.

TOP RIGHT

The European sense of luxury extends to the hotel bar, which is a destination in its own right.

RIGHT

This visually striking solution to the usual stair guardrail uses long, vertical metal strips running the full height of the well.



1 TRADITIONAL REINTERPRETATIONS

Hotel Claska

Tokyo, Japan 2003

Architects: Intentionallies; Urban Design Systems Co. Ltd

The many answers to the question "how to live". With this syntactically dubious mission statement, Hotel Claska sets out its ambition to reinvent the very concept of the hotel. Setting aside the idea that even the sort of people who go on *The Jerry Springer Show* to get advice on how to live their lives might think twice before seeking life guidance from a hotelier, Claska is nothing if not original in its thinking.

Its starting point, the eight-storey Hotel New Meguro, was a 35-year-old building located on Tokyo's Meguro Street, a downtown thoroughfare best known for its furniture stores. That hotel stopped trading in 2002 with little prospect of ever reopening since all the prevailing advice suggested that the location (a 3,000-yen/\$27 cab ride from the city centre) demanded a budget hotel that simply could not be justified by the amount of investment required to create it. Architecturally speaking, Hotel New Meguro's strange, blocky tile exterior had lost whatever charm it might once have held, and was clearly going to need something both financially and conceptually unusual if it was to be successfully reinvented.

The solution arrived at by client Urban Design Systems Inc was to marginalize the traditional hotel element altogether. This eight-storey building now has just nine guest rooms, which barely qualifies it as a hotel at all. The bulk of the budget was dedicated to the ground-floor lounge space and the fifth and sixth guest room floors. The rest was allocated to a variety of functions, central to which was a 27-room long-stay residential section, providing constant rent in attractive contrast to the variable income from the hotel rooms. Claska's other features reflect the shift of emphasis from traditional hotel to multifunction urban facility, for example, it has no minibars, no gym and no spa. Rather unusually, however, it does have a DJ booth in the middle of the lounge, art galleries, a bookstore and even a grooming centre for dogs.

Intentionallies' 60s/70s-minimalist interiors repeat something of the block-like, rectilinear lines of the original exterior and no two guest rooms are alike. Represented by Tei Shuwa, best known for their cooking appliances, while the contributor of a permanent interactive entrance installation is Steve Baker from the UK outfit Tomato, a firm that trades on an eclectic folio ranging from fashion shows and branding concepts to websites and kiosks. All this reinforces the originality of Urban Design Systems' 'out-of-the-box' thinking, since most firms with an

established track record in hotels would invariably have brought along some kind of traditional thinking.

There is, however, nothing traditional about Hotel Claska, which has already become a favourite destination for models, artists and musicians in Tokyo – celebrity DJs have even been known to come down from their guest rooms for a session in the lobby DJ booth. The overall lesson seems to be that the hotel dimension now exists less to make money in its own right than to help to position Claska as a fashionable, transient urban centre, a club where trendy things happen in an atmosphere that encourages passing through, whether for an hour, a week or a month.

BELOW

Hotel Claska, the former Hotel New Meguro, still exemplifies an arresting brand of 60s brutalism on Tokyo's downtown Meguro Street.

RIGHT

A bookshop is just one diverse purpose to which the complex housing Hotel Claska now lends itself.







503
504
505
506

501
502



PREVIOUS PAGES

The heavy, blocky lineaments of the original building are celebrated in Intentionallies' unique 60s/70s-minimalist interior treatment.

ABOVE AND RIGHT

Hotel Claska's eight-storey building houses just nine hotel guest rooms. The rest of the building is allocated to a variety of functions including long-stay rooms and suites.

FAR RIGHT

The entrance to Claska's dog grooming facility, complete with symbolic kennels – an idiosyncratic addition to this bright-and-buzzy, multifunction, urban 'socialspace'.





1 TRADITIONAL REINTERPRETATIONS

Ku'Damm 101

Berlin, Germany 2003

Architects: Eyl, Weitz, Würmle & Partner

Design and Concept: kessler und kessler

Once there was a recognizable hierarchy of hotels in which stars, rosettes or other such awards reliably indicated certain standards; below this came the more modest establishments, bed-and-breakfasts, guest houses and so on. These latter categories rarely attempted to entertain guests or offer more than basic food and accommodation. Today, the old distinctions are rapidly being eroded making hotels like Ku'Damm 101 much harder to pigeon-hole. Technically it is a three-star hotel, but then so are hundreds of other, much duller places. Ku'Damm 101 is a clever adaptation of a nondescript office block on Berlin's famous shopping street. Named after the building number and street it is situated on, this hotel's ambitions, expressed by kessler und kessler's efficient design, involve comfort, practicality and minimalism.

If the hotel has a sense of luxury, it is achieved not by trying for a cut-price version of expensive effects but by suggesting excellence through discreet taste and by making the practical things – mattresses, worktables, flooring – of the highest quality. The result is a cool, lifestyle hotel that, by being close to Berlin's trade fair centre, primarily targets the business traveller. However, it also appeals to short-stay tourists and those who appreciate a confident style of German design that embraces Le Corbusier's theories on colour (a restrained palette of greys, blues, greens and mauves) and a redefinition of luxury in terms of reduction to the pure and simple. Even the logo shows a certain minimalist bravado, consisting only of a stylized apostrophe that has been taken from the hotel name: a typographical symbol that indicates something has been omitted is satisfyingly appropriate in a hotel that consciously omits Grand Hotel effects in favour of something more economical.

The adoption of Le Corbusier's colour theories is not an idle affectation: kessler und kessler took care to acquire the pigments from a Swiss company that still produces them to the original guidelines of the architect, who believed that colour could compensate for missing architecture. Colour can also minimize the negative effects of unwanted architecture as kessler

und kessler demonstrated when disguising some of the exposed structural elements from the former office building. The lobby floor consists of natural asphalt, a surface that is intended to acquire an attractive patina of wear over time. The vertical surfaces, including the check-in desk, are faced with American walnut.

The design approach taken in the 170 guest rooms was essentially a reductive one, providing only a bed, a table, a chair and a closet, all designed by Munich's Lemongras (sic) Design Studio. The table tops, however, were made to be adaptable in size, doubling as writing desks or dining tables; the closets are large enough to accommodate a range of different clothing and the rooms themselves are all spacious enough to take an extra bed if needed. In this rigorous context, the decision to wrap the curvy TV cabinet in retro zebrano veneer looks almost wildly decadent but even this playful unit is highly functional, incorporating an Internet terminal fed by wireless LAN (Local Area Network) throughout the hotel. This pioneering touch is, strangely enough, often only available in budget hotels and not the more luxurious ones but it is one service that will surely be universal in a few years.

There were conscious decisions not to install mini-bars in the guest rooms, not to provide room service and – in what may soon prove to be an exceptional point of distinction in a world where hotel spas seem to be obligatory – no dedicated fitness or health facilities. Instead, guests have access to vending machines, a lobby bar that doubles as a take-out restaurant, a supermarket within the hotel and the option to hire a stocked mini-refrigerator. Working off the calories can be done with hired exercise equipment that is intended to be used in the privacy of the guest's room.

Ultimately, the Ku'Damm is an unusual but successful venture that may well point the way for many other urban hotels in the twenty-first century. The design effects used here have been achieved by creating attractive facilities and finishes that are appropriate to today's business traveller and style-conscious tourist and not by rolling out some cheap pastiche of a previous century's concept of luxury.

RIGHT

Ku'Damm 101's bid to suggest quality through good taste, rather than expensive materials, is reflected in its lobby where colour and form combine to create a distinctive atmosphere. The unashamed disguising of massive structural columns makes a virtue out of a necessity.





LEFT

The dining room, with its prominent hotel name signature on the wall and one of its ubiquitous supporting columns unavoidably accommodated by the space and the colour scheme.

RIGHT

Ku'Damm's bold use of colour extends to the guest rooms, adding a sense of enjoyment that does not depend upon expense.







ABOVE

The check-in desk, like most of the vertical surfaces in the lobby, is faced with American walnut. The lobby floor, meanwhile, uses natural asphalt, an inexpensive and easy to maintain surface that acquires an attractive patina of wear over time.

LEFT

Making a virtue out of a simple finish, this sink and shower area has overtones of institutional tiling but remains perfectly attractive and unfussy in Ku'Damm's calculated context of good quality minimalism.



LEFT

Despite a cluster of supporting columns in this example of one of the hotel's 170 guest rooms, the overall image is one of space and light. The furniture, by Lemongras Design Studio, includes a sinuous TV cabinet in zebrano veneer.

25hours Hotel

Hamburg, Germany 2003

Interior Architect: Evi Maeklstetter

Interior Design: Armin Fischer

25hours Hotel is designed by 3Meta Maeklstetter + Fischer and marketed by design hotels™ as 'an answer to the lifestyles of creative, metropolitan nomads'.

The metropolitan nomads in question are not, as the phrase may suggest, vagrants that are forever being moved on by the police, dragging their creative cardboard box homes behind them, but young movers and shakers from the media world. At least this is what the reception desk of this new Hamburg hotel strongly indicates. Studded with 420 convex mirrors and hovering above a plush pink carpet and a glowing band of light, suggestive of imminent take-off, the desk is an early indication that 25hours Hotel is neither a quiet refuge nor an oasis of calm in a busy city. Spilling out from the ceiling, two six-metre (20-foot) circles of light create a continuum of projected colours that changes the ambiance of the reception area, that is artfully dotted about with stools in leather and pink fabric, throughout the day.

As visitors negotiate all of this on their way to the lifts, they are confronted with another bank of mirrors, this time gimbal-mounted to multiply and reflect the lobby from a variety of different angles. 'As soon as guests step out of the lift, these mirrors show them exactly who and what is going on in the lobby,' says 3Meta principal Armin Fischer, sounding more like a security guard than a designer. Not so, it seems: 'The lobby of 25hours Hotel is all about seeing and being seen,' he explains. Exactly how one is seen rather depends on the time of day since those ceiling-mounted, ambiance-changing lights favour clear, bright colours for the ante-meridian hours ('to wake up and energize') and a whole range of lively hues working their way towards a synthetic sunset of 'red and pink club lighting' in the evening.

The pivoting mirrors mark the start of an area, called The Event Area. This 320 square metre (3,444 square foot) space, with a large open fire as its main feature, is designed to accommodate special events and meetings. The area also doubles as a lounge with sofas, stools and quadrant tables that are all easily movable, making it easy to reconfigure the space into various modules when necessary. On the third floor is The Living Room, which takes the form of another lounge roughly half the size of The Event Area. It is aimed at giving overnight guests a kind of common room or den to relax and play in. Table soccer and video screenings are available, but it also acts as a meeting place for youthful media types who, it is

thought, thrive on meetings and social get-togethers. Vending machines, cups and glasses are kept here with the idea of providing a more informal kind of community room with grey sofas and a six metre (20 foot) zebrano wood table as the main furniture.

The hotel's 65 guest rooms continue the theme of 'style without luxury' with their cheerful retro mix of pseudo 60s lines and contemporary colours. The base colours are pastel blues and greens but, throughout, white predominates. Most of the furniture was designed specifically for 25hours Hotel by the 3Meta design team who clearly have a liking for the sort of rounded-corner lines that Macintosh computers favoured at the start of the twenty-first century. A white, multi-purpose table can be used as seating, a writing desk or a suitcase rack and a pastiche 60s lamp, Spun1 by Sebastian Wrong for Flos, was initially produced expressly for 25hours Hotel.

The lamp, like most of the rest of the furnishing, can be purchased or ordered from reception, as can goody bags containing the sort of things some hotels offer gratis: for example, toiletries – its 'Hangover Package – For The Day After' is perhaps rather revealing. Here, in fact, lies the essence of 25hours Hotel. At its heart it is a budget hotel but it places the emphasis on fashion, style, trends and what it hopes is a young ambiance. It seems to be less a fashionable watering hole for moneyed media professionals than a relentlessly energetic, souped-up hostel for younger media people who were perhaps students not all that long ago.



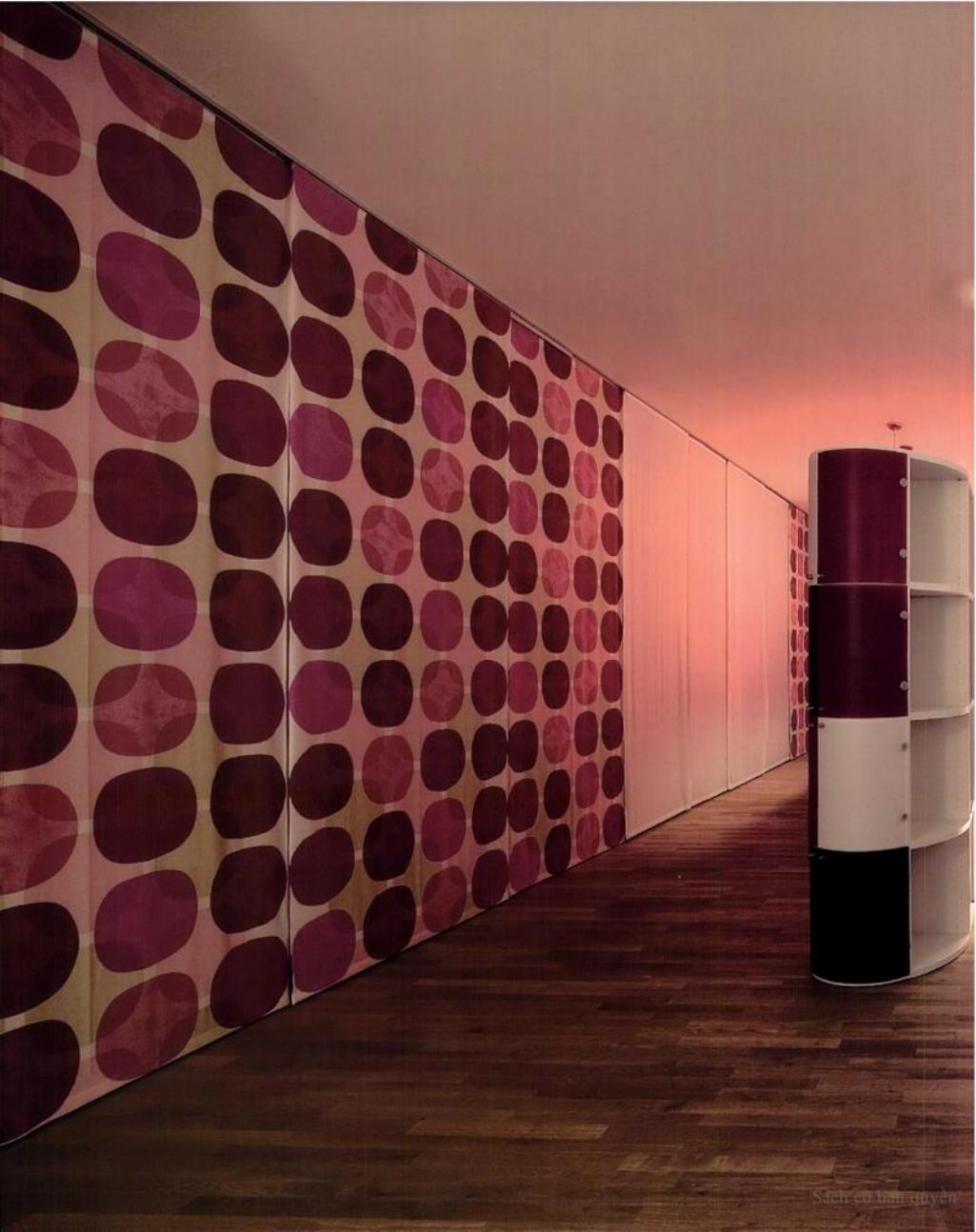
LEFT

Simply appointed rooms send out a message of 'style without luxury' using a cheerful retro mix of 60s lines and pastel colours. Most of the furniture was specifically designed by the 3Meta team who favour a soft, rounded-corner look.



ABOVE

In the lobby two six-metre (20-foot) circles of light are projected from the ceiling. The colours change throughout the day to create shifting moods and atmosphere.







ABOVE
A public bathroom continues the 25hours theme of bold colour, light washes and dramatic shapes. It also features a video screen.

LEFT
Public seating in a lobby where everyone is clearly on display.

RIGHT
More atmospheric lighting in the hotel lounge, complete with log store and expansive sofas.

PREVIOUS PAGE
A bank of swivel-mounted convex mirrors multiply and reflect the lobby from a variety of different angles.





2 Mainstream Experiments

In between the wilder shores of designer hotels and careful attempts to reinterpret the traditional hotel, lies the world of mainstream hotels. Mainstream does not necessarily mean bland, although creating experimental design treatments for hotel chains can prove a stiff challenge. Many such chains have difficulty letting go of corporate concepts such as using a pan-global design treatment for guest rooms, which means that waking up in one of their hotel rooms in Amsterdam is indistinguishable from waking up in one in Tokyo. W Hotels, however, have taken what would once have been called designer hotels into the mainstream – their international city hotels are now characterized by a design-led approach rather than any one-design style. In the UK, the myhotel group has also given notice of its commitment to incorporate a sense of fun and fashionability into an accessible hotel chain, while Apex is building a reputation for making its business hotels also attractive enough for a family break. To set the seal on this acceptance of imaginative design into the mainstream, radical designers Yabu Pushelberg were even given an almost free rein at a Le Meridien hotel in the heart of the American Midwest.

myhotel Chelsea

London, England, UK 2002

Architects and Interior Design: Project Orange

It is arguable whether the myhotel concept should properly be considered to be a mainstream experiment rather than a variant type of designer hotel. However, the case for treating it as nouveau mainstream hinges on the way that individual myhotels respond to, reinforce and reflect back the character of the locale they are in. This, after all, is what the best mainstream hotels used to do so effortlessly in the days before the big brand chains moved in and imposed their standardized hospitality experience, regardless of context or neighbourhood.

Andy Thrasyvoulou's burgeoning myhotel concept demonstrates that he too is obsessed with brands, although not necessarily his own. Borrowed themes and slogans are deployed to glamorize the spirit of a particular myhotel according to its setting. myhotel Brighton will be 'Maharishi Meets Freddie Mercury' claims Thrasyvoulou, as if such a meeting might actually be a good thing! The theme for myhotel Paddington, which is situated near a major London rail terminal, will be 'Where Travel Meets Time', while the recently completed myhotel Chelsea is characterized as a union between *Brideshead Revisited* and *Sex and the City*. If this is all reminiscent of a rather desperate Hollywood movie pitch ('It's *Out of Africa* meets *Pretty Woman*,' says a hopeful script agent at the start of Robert Altman's film, *The Player*) it does identify a keen awareness of the contemporary power of brands and lifestyle associations in the context of hotel design.

Apart from its unique 'theme', myhotel Chelsea also trades on its chic address and its proximity to a number of stylish stores, restaurants and boutiques. Out of a conventional hotel building, designer James Soane of Project Orange has created an ersatz English country home into which American *feng shui* practitioner, William Spear, has injected the kind

of furniture placements that, in reality, would rarely preoccupy the owners of a real English country home. Forty-five bedrooms, studios and suites similarly combine the old with the new, using pastel décor, eclectic furniture (an unashamed marriage of antique and contemporary) and the mandatory flat screen TVs, DVD and CD players plus Internet access. The Thai Suite is a reinvention of an earlier luxury facility that was already present in the original hotel, before myhotel moved in, and similarly mixes the traditional with the modish.

Two delinquent bedrooms, located behind the bar, are explicitly designed to accommodate the kind of spontaneous sexual encounters that require inflammatory décor and access to a serious supply of alcohol. Ruby and Scarlet, as these rooms are archly labelled, feature hot reds and pinks, 'polar bear' throws, erotic photographs and low light levels. The advertised opportunity to book either room at short notice with the bartender on duty gives more than a suggestion of where the *Sex and the City* tag comes in, even if the stately decadence of *Brideshead Revisited* remains rather more elusive. myhotel Chelsea, though, sells itself primarily through its service. It is a 'personalized' hotel in which a menu of individual preferences (form to be filled in prior to arrival) is combined with nostalgic gimmicks, such as summertime ice-cream van chimes and afternoon tea with a bone china service, alongside the obligatory health facility and a restful conservatory ('in which residents can escape,' says the hotel blurb, perhaps unwisely).

The décor throughout this hotel is essentially a stage set, a backdrop to a theatrical smorgasbord of New Age guest experiences, zestfully themed on how mainstream English hotels might look if only all mainstream locations were like Chelsea.

RIGHT

Where *Brideshead Revisited* meets *Sex and the City*; myhotel Chelsea is not afraid to pitch itself as a feel-good experience as this promotional shot of a guest room and the lower half of a guest indicates.





W Mexico City

Mexico City, Mexico 2003

Architects: KMD

Interior Design: Studio GAIA

The W brand, owned by Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc, represents an ongoing attempt to create an international chain of hotels where the unifying factor is not a uniformly applied visual style but rather a consistent preoccupation with a dynamic idea of 'style', to be interpreted in different ways at different locations. In 2003, the eighteenth W property, W Mexico City, was launched. Starwood jointly developed this 25-storey, 237-room hotel with the Mexico City-based Grupo Plan SA de CV, employing the New York design team Studio GAIA to impart the latest W look.

Architecturally eye-catching, the KMD-designed hotel building stakes its claim in the sophisticated Polanco neighbourhood of Mexico City with an all-glass façade that turns the hotel into a sophisticated goldfish bowl for passers-by. The image is a felicitous one, since the series of stepped lounge areas in the lobby appear to float on water, with various koi ponds visible beneath the walkways and seating areas. A black lava stone tunnel leads to the hotel reception, while bars and restaurants are accessed by negotiating a series of loosely connected 'islands' of seating, upholstered in white leather and yellow fabric. These rise in a spiral formation to The Whiskey, Rande Gerber's first bar outside the US, and one of the premium attractions of the hotel. Another focus is the second-floor restaurant, Solea, developed by Cornerstone, the outfit that was responsible for Chicago's one sixtyblue and Wave restaurants.

The enclosed glass theme is extended through to the hotel spa, with its centrepiece sauna based not on

Scandinavian pine but the traditional Mexican adobe hut. The whole spa is surrounded by green glass, as is the health club workout room that overlooks – and is overlooked by – the street. The guestrooms also challenge conventional notions – cherry red ceilings and white terrazzo floors invert the usual tonal arrangement, while the bathrooms have been promoted into major spaces in their own right. Covered in light-hued stone, the over-sized bathrooms feature window views, large 'rain'-style showers with additional body jets and even optional hammocks.

W Mexico City has a full-service business centre, including meeting facilities and a conference centre, and it also offers a special programme to ease its business guests 'into a creative frame of mind with lively music, smells, tastes and visuals'. At this kind of level, the hospitality sounds not just comprehensive but relentless, perhaps catering more towards the more adventurous type of guest. Such a guest, having emerged from The Whiskey bar and successfully negotiated its spiral access trail without falling into a koi pond, would seem to crave a doze in a wet hammock before working out in the full gaze of pedestrians strolling by in the city's famously polluted air. No doubt in practise the experience is far more relaxed, although as Barry S. Sternlicht, Chairman and CEO of Starwood Hotels points out, 'This is certainly our most avant-garde hotel yet'. He adds, 'The design is sophisticated, vibrant, sexy and full of surprises – which fits in well with Mexico City, and particularly the Polanco neighbourhood.'



ABOVE

The 25-storey W Mexico City is a conventional tower block with some very unconventional public spaces within.

LEFT

The hotel spa is surrounded by green glass, as is the health club workout room that overlooks the street.

RIGHT

The dining area extends the hotel's theme of a glass envelope that encourages clear views out of and into the building.







LEFT
Local ethnic touches in the form of a warm, adobe-inspired colour scheme and a variety of simulated tree trunks in a public space off the main lobby.

RIGHT
A guest room with a glimpse into one of the bathrooms where 'rain-type' shower systems and removable hammocks add a touch of the exotic and even the unexpected.



W New York – Times Square

New York, USA 2002

Architects: Brennan Beer Gorman Architects

Interior Design: Yabu Pushelberg

The real estate site of W New York – Times Square was originally intended to be the home of a Planet Hollywood hotel before the whole Planet Hollywood enterprise ran into financial difficulties during its construction. Instead, the site went to Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc who recruited the ascendant Toronto-based firm of Yabu Pushelberg. They were to carry on the tradition of design-aware W hotels that was first established in 1998 in Manhattan with the W hotel at 49th Street and Lexington Avenue. The W New York – Times Square was the sixteenth in the W chain to open worldwide and posed a particular challenge for Yabu Pushelberg, if only because of the raucous nature of its locale – only in such a hyperactive urban context could a building as gargantuan as the nearby Marriott Marquis actually get lost in the landscape.

Yabu Pushelberg's solution was typical of their usual approach, briskly characterized as 'class for the mass' by Glenn Pushelberg. They created a serene internal landscape that seems to float above the kerbside hustle from which the transitional entrance area provides an immediate refuge, with a cascading glass-enclosed water wall accompanied by the sound of crashing waves from above.

Beyond this aquatic introduction, the reception lounge and lobby quickly establishes a human scale with a mix of private booths made of resin and low communal seating for larger groups. A backlit resin table top bar with ash stain wood finish adds a touch of the class for what Pushelberg likes to call the mass, and the overall feel is one of an accessible, good quality environment, removed from (but still connected to) the febrile atmosphere of one of the world's most famous intersections.

The neutral coloured guest rooms are painted in textured grey and feature more of the omnipresent resin fixtures that Yabu Pushelberg have used liberally throughout the hotel; here they encase the mini-bar and TV, suggesting design-awareness without overstating it in what is essentially a contemporary look that does not want to appear too trendy.

If the W New York – Times Square has a stand-out focal point, there is no mistaking exactly what it is: The Blue Fin Restaurant. The restaurant contract had already been given to Steve Hanson, whose previous concept restaurants (Fiamma, The Blue Water Grill and Ruby Foo's) had firmly established him on the New York dining scene, when Yabu Pushelberg were brought on board. Hanson was not initially impressed, being

used to having more design control, but the Canadian designers eventually won him round with an extension of the entrance theme. They devised a romantic, undulating marine-inspired treatment, featuring a plaster wall that mimics ribbed sand, a starfish wall and a fish mobile by Japanese artist Hirotoishi Sawada. The two-level restaurant's entrance is through a 'storefront' bar with large windows that face onto Broadway. Illuminated resin bar tables – apart from prompting the thought that Yabu Pushelberg must have negotiated a really great deal with their resin supplier – act as beacons for the passing public.

Throughout the restaurant's two levels are a series of smaller spaces that seek to introduce an intermittent sense of intimacy, in what is in fact quite a large 400-seater establishment. The restaurant's lower level has a faster feel and look, more attuned to the energy levels of the street, while the upper section subtly uses colour and texture to achieve a more subdued and reflective atmosphere. The Blue Fin is the destination element within the W New York – Times Square, which has now become a target for New York visitors who want a touch of class without the overwhelming sense of participating in a full-blown designer hotel experience.

BELOW

The hotel bar with a backlit display of bottles – drinking and dining are the focus of this very public hotel that faces both onto Broadway and Times Square.

RIGHT

One of several marine references in the hotel, all of which have been inspired by The Blue Fin restaurant. This mobile by Hirotoishi Sawada above the main stairs evokes a shoal of fish swimming individually but in concert.











LEFT
Large, square tables with circular stools are complemented by contemporary lighting.

PREVIOUS PAGE LEFT
A luminous art piece hovers aloft in a secluded section of The Blue Fin restaurant.

PREVIOUS PAGE RIGHT
A restrained guest room in a hotel located near one of the least restrained intersections in Manhattan, outside can be seen a night view of Times Square and the city.



LEFT

The dune-ribbed pattern of The Blue Fin restaurant makes a spectacular introduction to Steve Hanson's hip eaterie. Other Hanson restaurants in New York include Fiamma and The Blue Water Grill.

BELOW

These glowing resin bar tables are conspicuously displayed near the windows that face onto Broadway, so attracting passing trade as well as servicing the needs of hotel guests.



2 MAINSTREAM EXPERIMENTS

W New York – Union Square

New York, USA 2000

Architects: Brennan Beer Gorman Architects

Interior Design: The Rockwell Group

The Rockwell Group is a design firm that has made a name for itself with a wide range of outstanding leisure and recreation facilities as well as residential and business premises. Casinos, restaurants, sports architecture, bars and clubs all reflect principal David Rockwell's fascination with theatre in all its varied forms. The firm's headquarters are in Union Square, Manhattan, which, coincidentally, was also the site of a fine old insurance company building that was to become the second New York W hotel to be built by Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc in 2000.

Unlike Times Square, Union Square has enjoyed an uneven role and reputation over the years. Once the focal point of an elegant area, today Union Square is an undistinguished park, the site of an occasional produce market and a place that is seemingly forever undergoing some kind of slow and inconclusive renovation. Union Square is also the lower mid-town location of a major subway interchange station and remains a site that is still lacking in any distinctive characteristics, although it does boast several surrounding buildings of merit. One such building is the Guardian Life Building on Park Avenue South; built in 1911, with additions in the 1960s, it is, without doubt, one of the best in the area.

This 20-storey granite and limestone landmark structure with its famous four-storey mansard roof was re-imagined by The Rockwell Group and architect of record Brennan Beer Gorman Architects as an extension of Union Square Park. The lobby acts as a kind of living room, looking out onto the grassy public space to which the building is notionally attached with the use of planted grass. The gracious living of an earlier age was evoked for this W hotel, mainly through a newly built grand staircase of limestone, mahogany

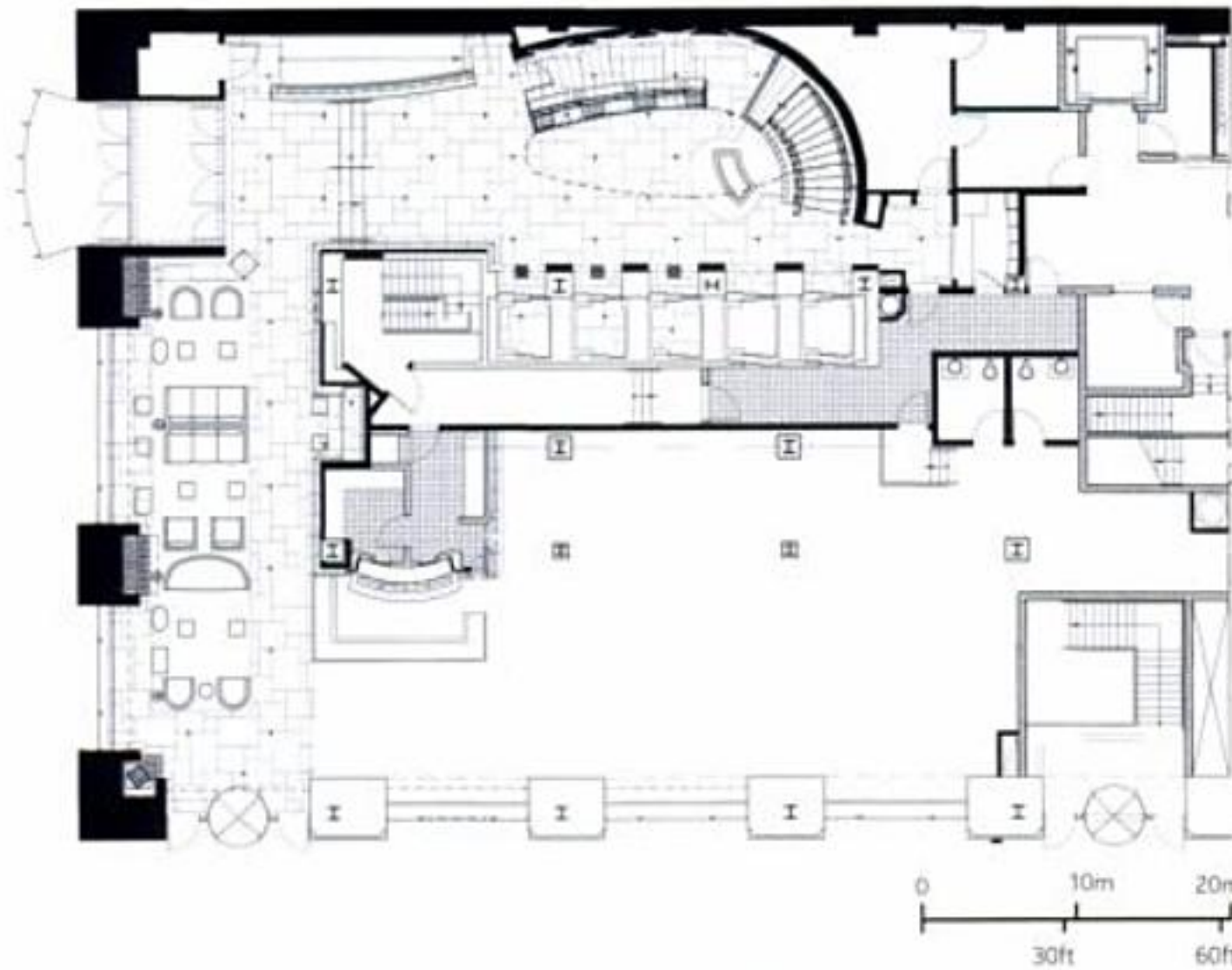
and steel that rises dramatically from the ground floor to a ballroom on the next level. Coffered ceilings and vaulted marble hallways add further suggestions of the elegance of the past. If this is hotel décor as theatre, however, it is theatre of a restrained sort and some way removed from earlier Rockwell pastiches like the oriental restaurant, Ruby Foo's. This project was self-confessedly based not upon original Asian styles and materials but on the particular look of a minor 1960 movie, *The World of Suzy Wong*. Despite this, playful touches and quotations are still to found at the W and were apparently inspired by the Green Market, a local produce fair that sets up its stalls on certain days of the week in the park. A small lawn of green grass sits unexpectedly on top of the reception desk and boxes of the same grass flank the staircase. Giant wall panels, made of richly-grained makore wood, feature mother-of-pearl buttons and elsewhere, in the living room-cum-lobby, real ivy plants hang from the walls, while spotlights project a yellow flower-petal pattern onto the ceiling.

If the hope is to echo something of the design elements from early 20th-century parks and gardens, then the danger is that the real park outside rather undercuts this aspiration; to date, the internal public spaces of the W New York – Union Square certainly look more verdant and well tended than the rather run-down external public space of the actual square. The 270 guest rooms, however, do not continue with the theme of plants and foliage, being cosy and whimsical only insofar as the beds are covered in shiny sharkskin covers and appointed with leather headboards. Otherwise, they employ a natural palette of aubergine, taupe and browns and generally adhere to restrained contemporary lines.

RIGHT

Le Grand Escalier reinvented. This impressive limestone, mahogany and steel staircase rises from the hotel lobby to a ballroom on the next floor. It succeeds in evoking the former grandeur of the old building while adding playful details such as the grass plantings.





LEFT
A plan of the hotel's
ground floor.

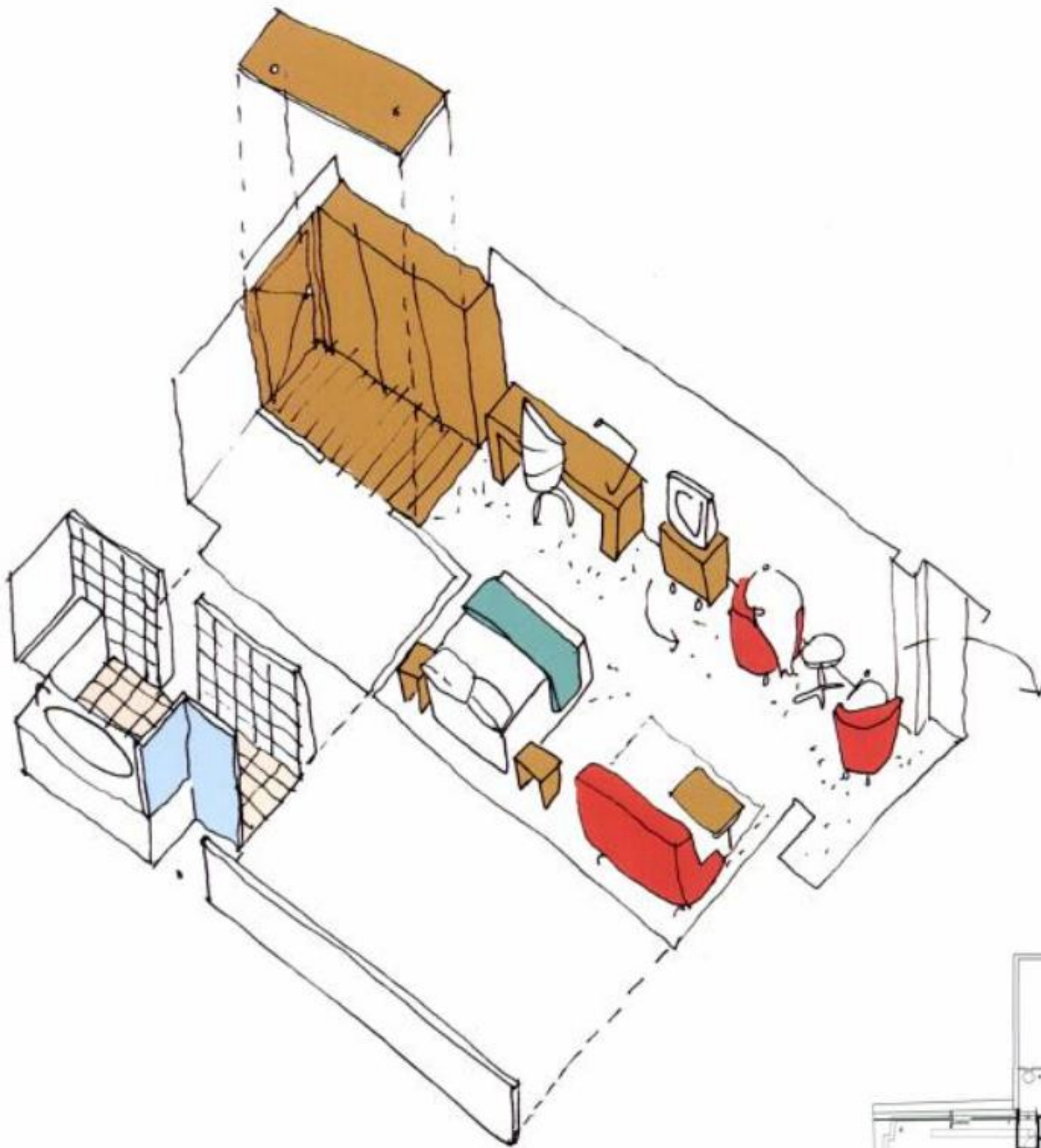


LEFT
Subtle floral motifs line the
illuminated wall recesses
and lend extra drama and
an enhanced sense of
height to the hotel's
signature staircase.

RIGHT
Indoor topiary at the W
New York – Union Square.
A recurring motif, a yellow
flower, is used to decorate
the recessed objects.





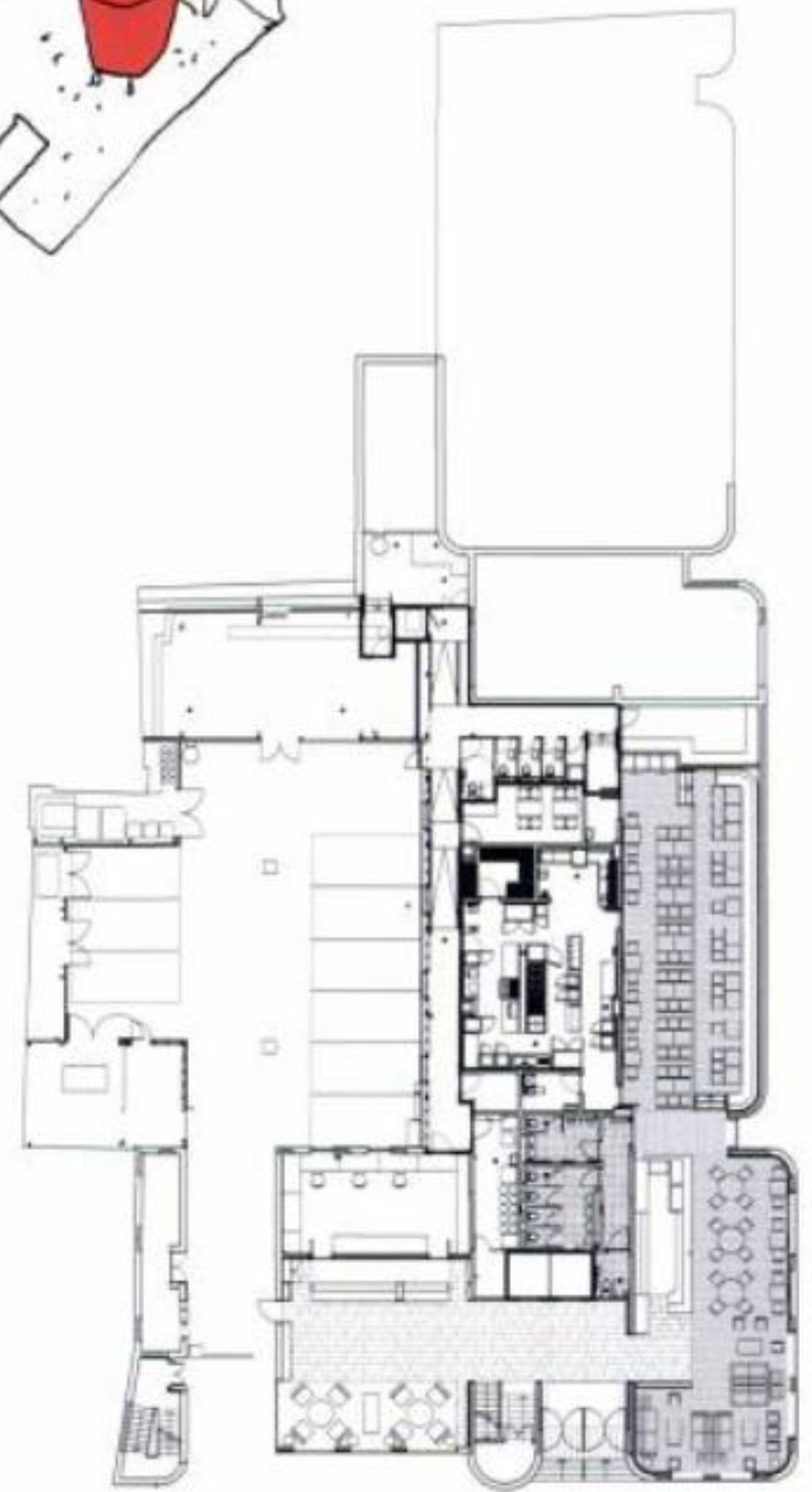


LEFT

A drawing of one of the guest rooms at Apex City Hotel, many of which had to be ingeniously configured to maintain Apex's reputation for offering larger than usual bedrooms.

RIGHT

The Apex City Hotel's restaurant and bar areas are lined with American black walnut slats, which define the distinctive curved corners that characterized the original building.



RIGHT

A floor plan of the hotel.



Malmaison

Birmingham, England, UK 2003

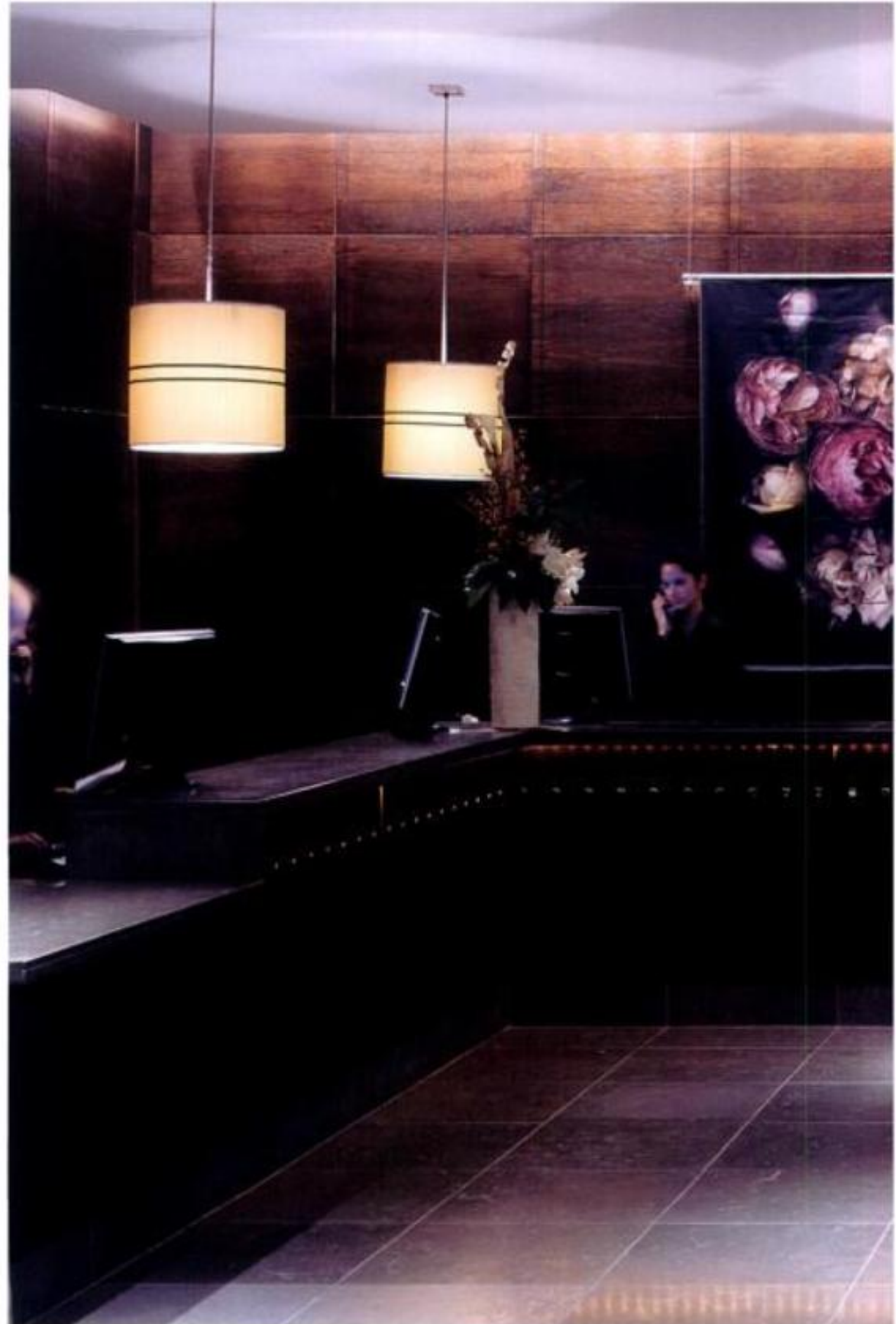
Architects: Ferrier Crawford

Interior Design: Jestico + Whiles

Over the past few years, the London-based firm Jestico + Whiles has enjoyed a fruitful and ongoing relationship with the UK Malmaison hotel group. The thread of the work has been to interpret Malmaison's core values in a variety of northern locations. The Birmingham hotel, their first in the Midlands, was unique in that, instead of adapting an existing hotel, it was located in a 'new' building. The canal-side Mailbox building, however, is new only in the sense that the old Royal Mail sorting office had already been converted into a large retail and leisure adaptation. The layout, however, offered the designers a new level of flexibility.

Malmaison's overarching style is 'inspired' by the 19th century French Château Malmaison, located just outside Paris, which is an elaborate piece of architecture that might at first seem a rather pretentious model for a mainstream UK hotel chain with premises in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle and Manchester. Jestico + Whiles have tactfully accepted this challenge and repositioned an essentially flamboyant concept of luxury in a more restrained and contemporary way. Another design aim of the Malmaison chain has been to infuse each hotel with something of the character of its location. In Birmingham, a city long over-shadowed by a post-war rebuilding programme of unparalleled hostility, this can be seen to have posed something of a challenge. Birmingham may claim to have more miles of canal than Venice but it is for good reason that Venice never claims to have almost as many miles of canal as Birmingham. This said, the Birmingham Malmaison is another step in the right direction of reinventing England's second city for the 21st century.

The Mailbox building's steel-framed shell allowed Jestico + Whiles unusual latitude, which led to the development of some large public spaces within the hotel. The building is entered from a newly created street (intended to unify the whole Mailbox complex) into the ground floor, which houses both the hotel reception and a holistic spa. The entrance lobby is clad in fumed and limed oak panels, incorporating Malmaison's signature detail of mirrors that contrast with the polished, dark-stained cabinetry. A grand spiral staircase (a reference to the staple feature of the grand châteaux evoked by the hotel name) features an illuminated wall of raspberry red glass and winds through the lobby leading to the next floor where the brasserie is located. On a mezzanine above the brasserie is the conference facility.



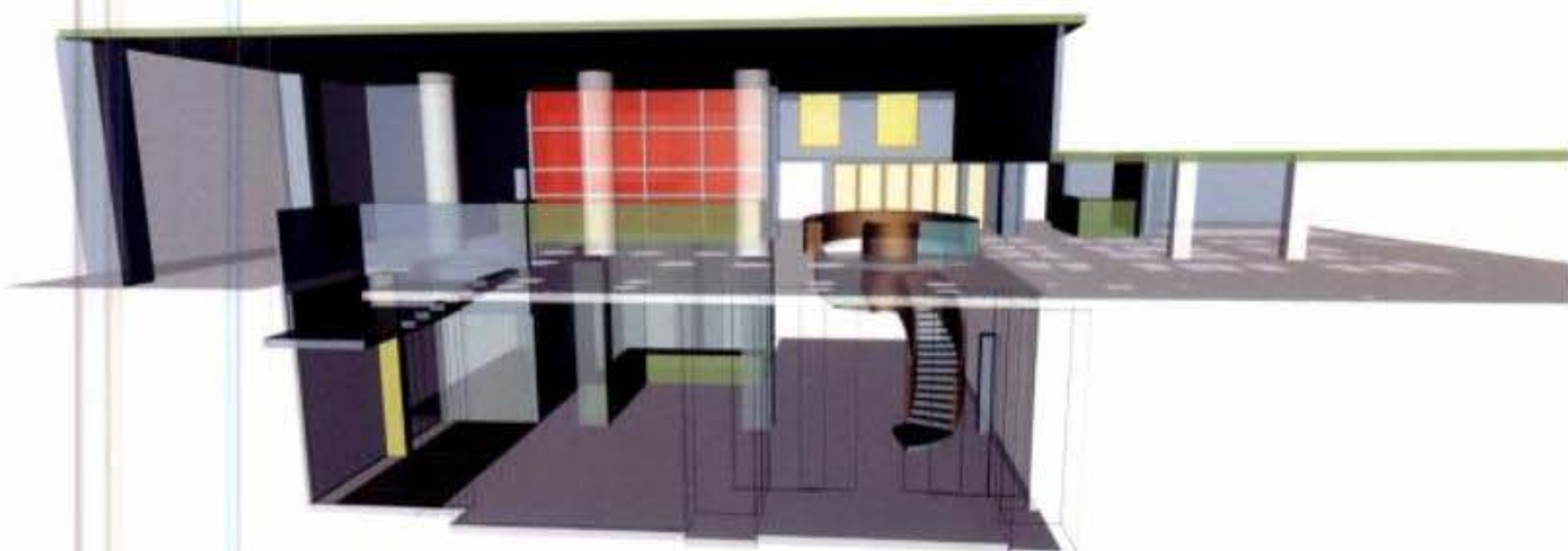
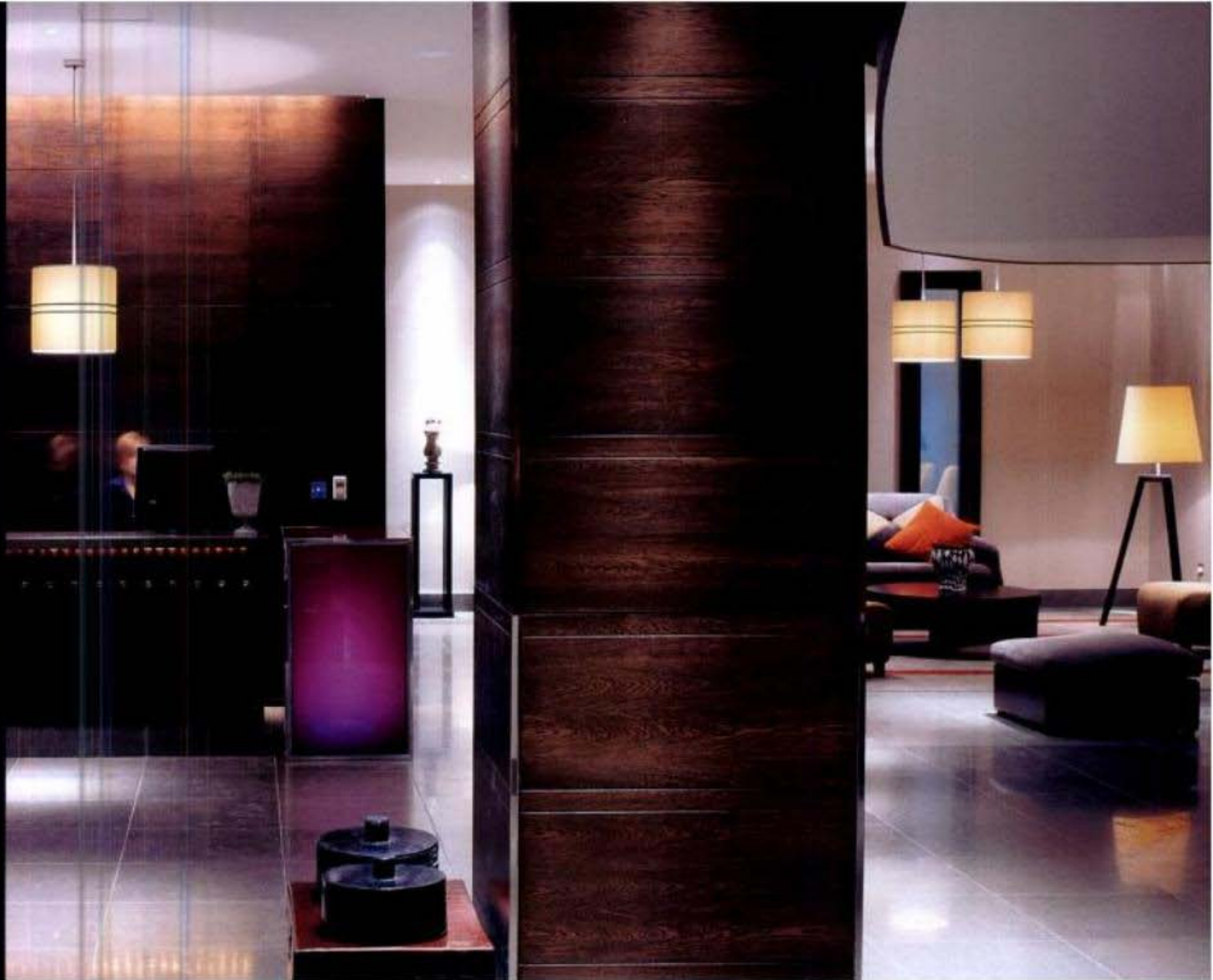
The 189 guest rooms on the six floors above are furnished in low-key contemporary style and feature photographs of Birmingham's industrial structures, which, in the main, tend to be rather less photogenic than those of Edinburgh or even Newcastle. However, for all its traditionally poor press, Birmingham was once the workshop of the world. A heavy industry giant at the heart of the Industrial Revolution, today it is an increasingly well-appointed city and, a vibrant meeting point for international business conventions and exhibitions. The city may have suffered badly at the hands of the developers in the 1960s and it may also have been dangerously slow to adapt to the terminal decline in its manufacturing base, but if it is now looking confident again, this is in no small measure due to its ever-improving built environment. In its own way, the Malmaison makes a small but worthy addition to that environment.

ABOVE

The lobby of Birmingham's Malmaison sets the tone for Jestico + Whiles' modern take on traditional luxury, delivered in a cool and restrained style.

RIGHT

Although not strictly a 'new' building, Birmingham's Malmaison was the first in the chain to enjoy relatively free spatial flexibility within the adapted mail sorting office building now known as The Mailbox.



2 MAINSTREAM EXPERIMENTS



ABOVE

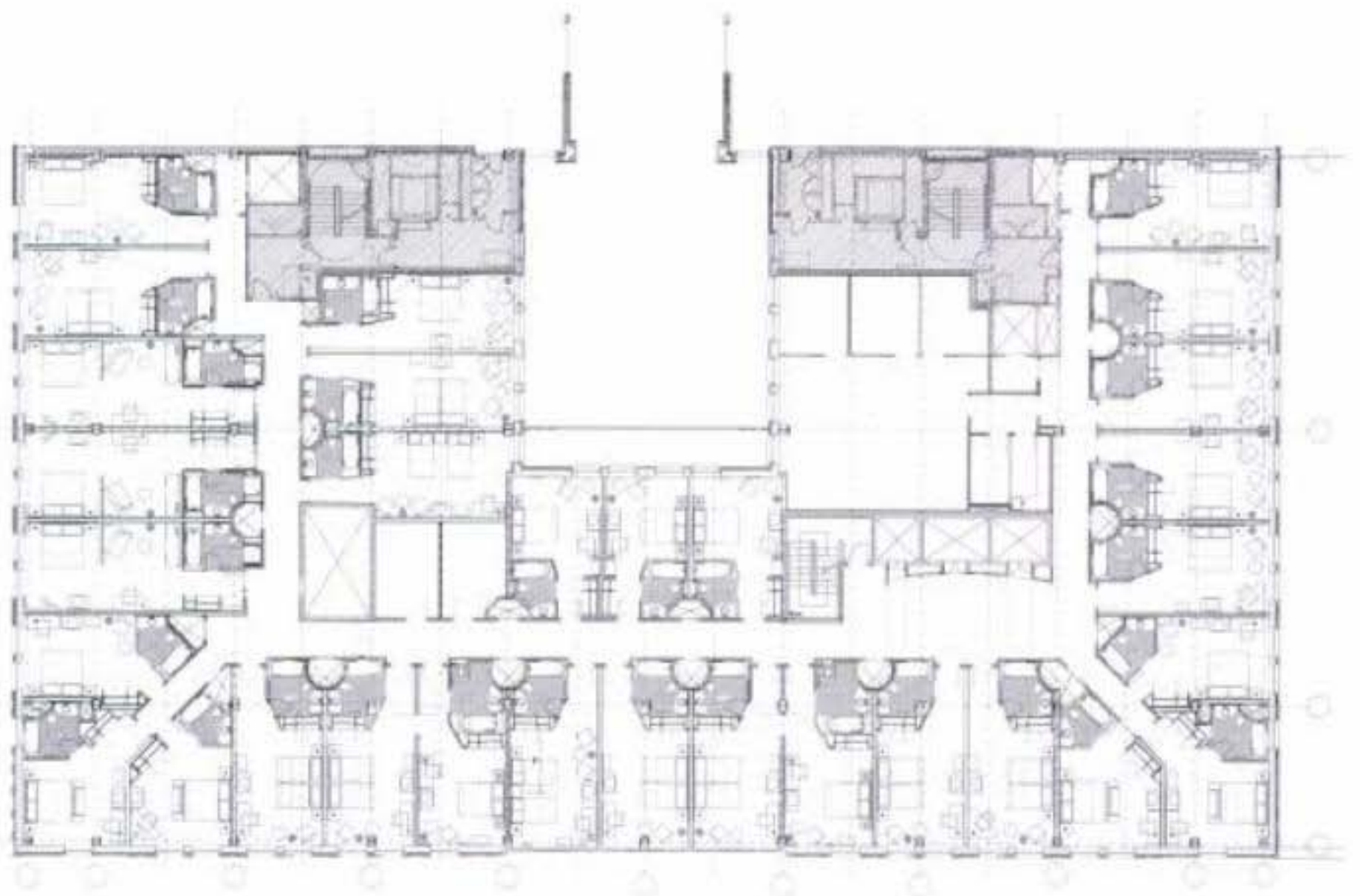
A stylish guest room, one of 189 furnished in low-key contemporary style and many featuring archive photographs of Birmingham's more famous industrial structures.

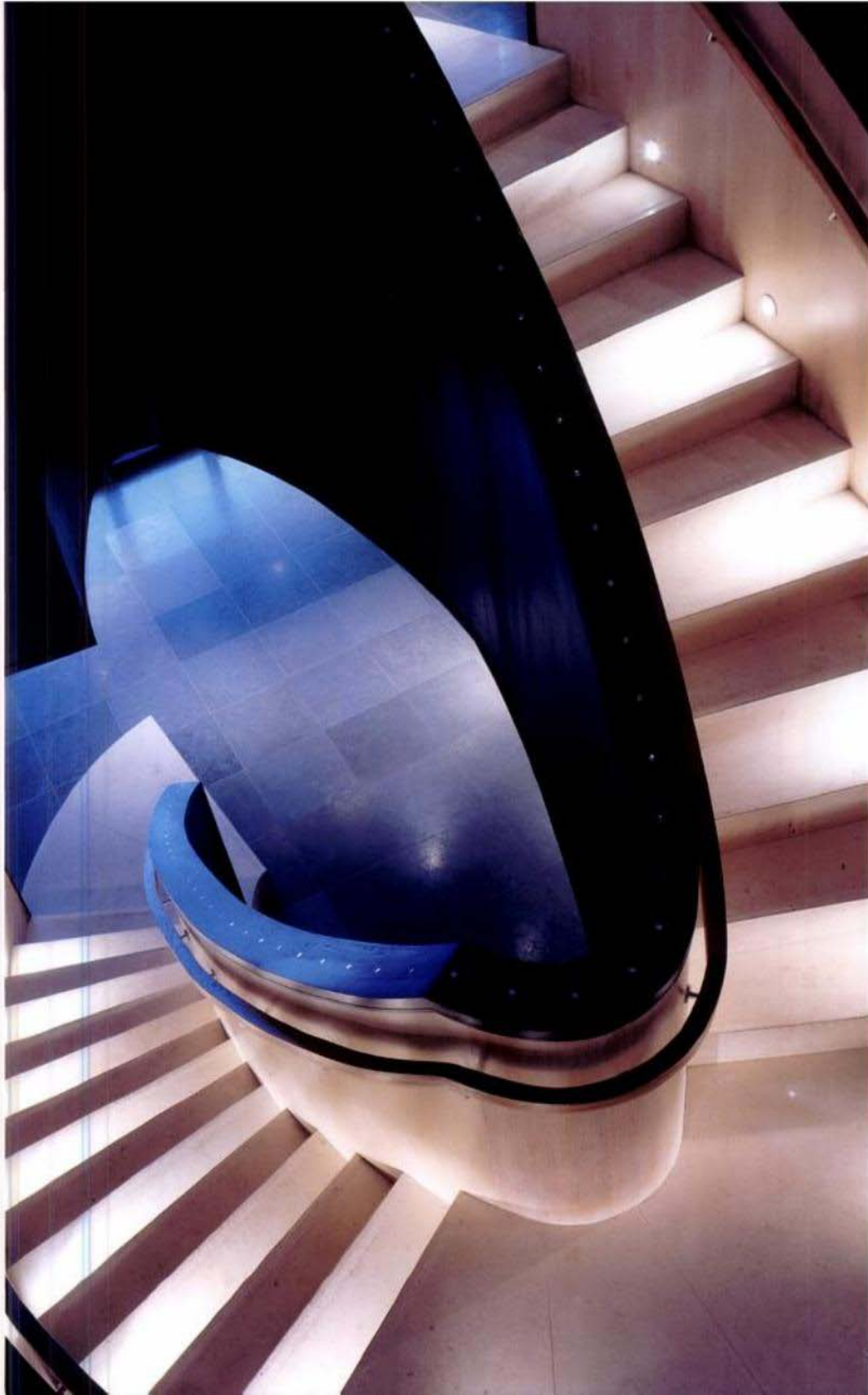
RIGHT

This plan shows the straightforward geometry of Malmaison's space within the Mailbox complex. The hotel shares the ground floor with a holistic spa.

FAR RIGHT

The staircase echoes Birmingham's past role as the workshop of the world. Its scale, shape and detailing evoke the lineaments of heavy industry without sacrificing the all-pervading sense of style.

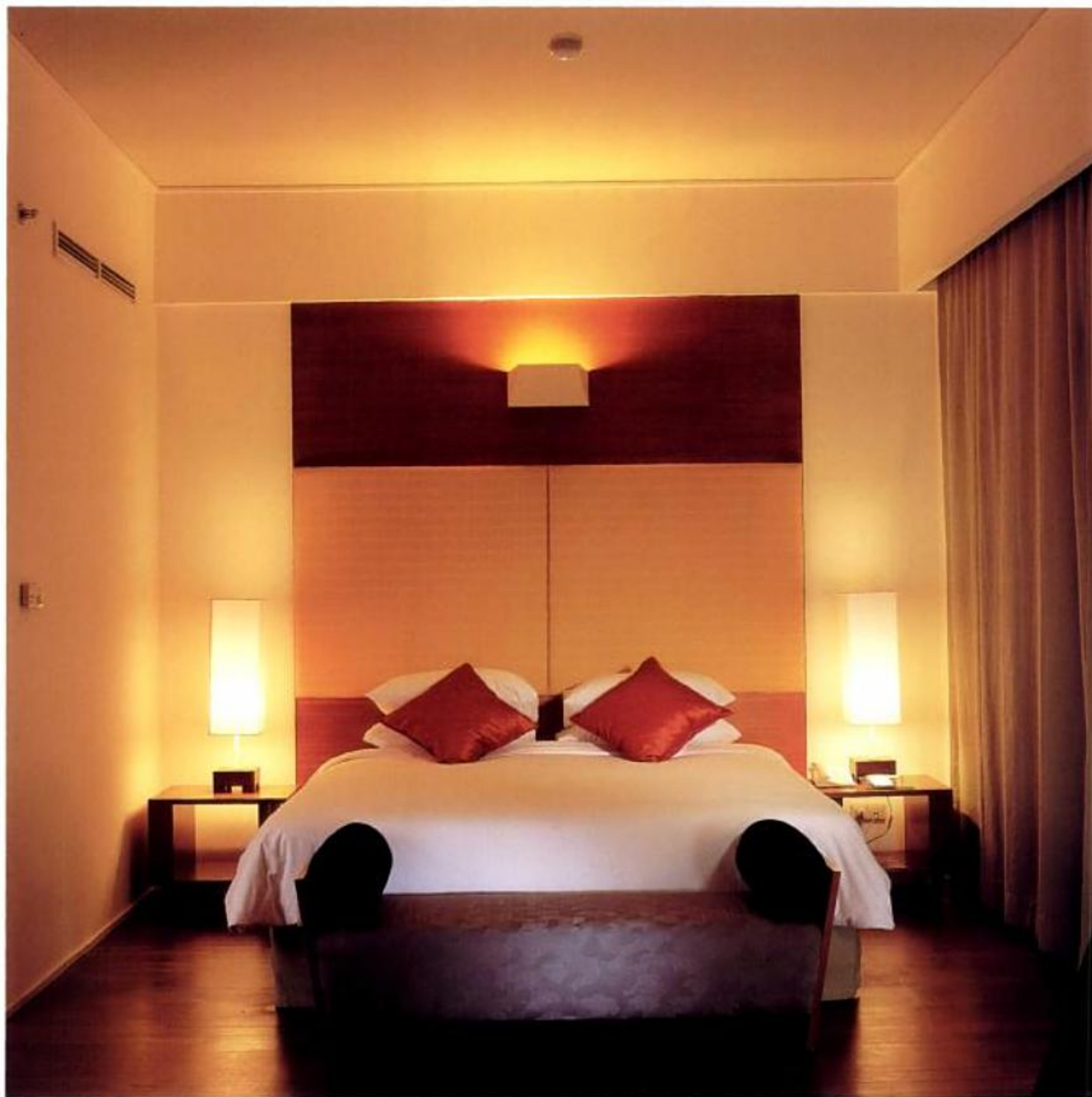






ABOVE

A contemporary take on luxury. There is an architectural dimension to this striking seating area in Malmaison's lobby.



ABOVE

Saffron and crimson dominate in the guest rooms. The massive fabric-covered, wooden headboards almost reach the 2.5 metre (8 foot)-high ceilings. The floorboards are made of a dark indigenous wood, *merbau*.

Gone are the days when 'designer' was a parvenu adjective used to describe anything that had aspirations to visual sophistication. Certainly you would be hard pressed to find anything at the cutting edge of today's hotel design that does not qualify for that accolade, outmoded as it is. Today, however, the phrase 'designer hotel' signifies something subtler and more varied. It might simply signify the bestowing of a stylish imprimatur, as is the case with Bilbao's Miróhotel, which is credited to a fashion designer, or it may indicate that it fell to a designer to reinvent the concept of a hotel and turn it into an art piece, as with Matali Crasset's HI Hotel. Many other possibilities exist in between, reflecting the current elevated influence of the designer: the designer as Fashionable Society Figure; the designer as Artist; and the designer as Cultural Historian. The possibilities are many, although the day of the designer as Pioneer in a world of drab hotels is now gone. One might even argue that Starck, Putman *et al* did their 1980s trailblazing too well and that now their work here is, if not exactly done, at least done differently.

UNA Hotel

Florence, Italy 2003

Architect: Fabio Novembre

Fabio Novembre's conversion of an industrial building into a luxury hotel for the Italian hotel group UNA has given Florence's historic district of San Frediano a highly dramatic new space, dripping with the kind of interior design that could never be called understated. Fabio Novembre himself could likewise never be called understated and his commentaries on his own work seem intended to boost his reputation for eccentricity rather than to shed light on the design process. Accordingly, the Florence UNA is one of the latest expressions of Novembre's belief that the hotel is 'a spatial narrative touching on themes like the mobility of the planet, presence within absence and intellectual nomadism.' How this view sits alongside his other stated conviction that the UNA is 'a tree whose far-reaching branches extend across the world but with roots firmly embedded in its native soil' is anybody's guess, but such obliquity may incline us to mistrust his third declaration. 'Whatever [the UNA] may be' he claims, 'it is not a design hotel'. Of course the UNA clearly is a design hotel. It is a typically eclectic Novembre confection deploying diverse materials that include mosaics, leather and printed lamé. Guests know what they are in for upon encountering an entrance and reception area where a long loop-the-loop strip of mosaic tiling encircles, envelopes and guides them to the reception desk which is also absorbed into the mosaic treatment. Mosaic is a vernacular feature of Florence where it can be seen in many of the surrounding region's villas, although not quite like this. Novembre's loop motif continues into the bar area which is equipped with some similarly enclosing AND1 sofas from Cappellini. A restaurant has been conceived as a refectory, with a single long, sinuous table, designed by Dutch artist and architect Joep van Lieshout to bring guests together rather than keep them apart. The accompanying Shaker chairs and stools are by Atelier

van Lieshout and aloft the restaurant's moulded ceiling echoes the line of the edge of the table with an illuminated 'stained glass' ribbon of light. The interior design does not stop trying for equally big effects even beyond the reception, bar, lounge and restaurant: it also invades the traditionally more restrained zones of corridors and guest rooms. Novembre is big on corridors, citing those in Kubrick's *The Shining* 'where the actors get lost running around the corridors'. His point, as ever, is unclear, but he seems to approve of disorientation since his treatment of UNA's corridors abandons room numbers altogether in favour of identifying the 84 guest room doors by sticking on reproductions of full-length portraits from the Uffizi Gallery. These tenebrous, life-sized portraits stand in funereal ranks beneath Daliesque corridor ceilings that are all dark waveforms and ripples. Behind the doors the guest rooms feature mosaic again, with floors rising up seamlessly to merge into horizontal surfaces here and there, sleeping areas raised on platforms and a profusion of textures applied from everything to walls, counters and closets: black leather, rosewood and wengé panelling and fuchsia felt. Closet doors feature images of clothes on hangers.

In a rare moment of lucidity, Novembre will admit to theming the UNA on the Florence of Lucrezia Borgia and Machiavelli, a murky proto-Sopranos world of shadows, plotting, duplicity and death. As a hospitality concept it is original although it does have its downside. After a grappa or two in the bar, trying to walk along a mosaic tube where the wall suddenly runs round the ceiling may prove almost as disturbing as encountering a dimly lit corridor full of long-dead Florentines and forgetting whether your room key fits Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici or Giovanni Bentivoglio. As ever, Novembre has some helpful words for guests who might find his vision too intense. 'Life is a challenge,' he says. 'Living with a capital L is the hardest thing to do.'

RIGHT

A ribbon of spiral mosaic tiling encircles and leads the guest from the entrance to the reception.

LEFT

A sinuous, snaking table draws diners together rather than hiving them off onto individual tables. The lighting panel exactly echoes the lines of the table beneath.









LEFT

A guest room showing the closet, complete with a clothes graphic, and the bed raised on its own platform. A variety of textures add richness to the room.

RIGHT

Two doors cleverly disguised as old paintings with gilded door frames instead of picture frames.





RIGHT
One of Soho House's public spaces: a new take on the idea of the club.



4 DESIGNER HOTELS



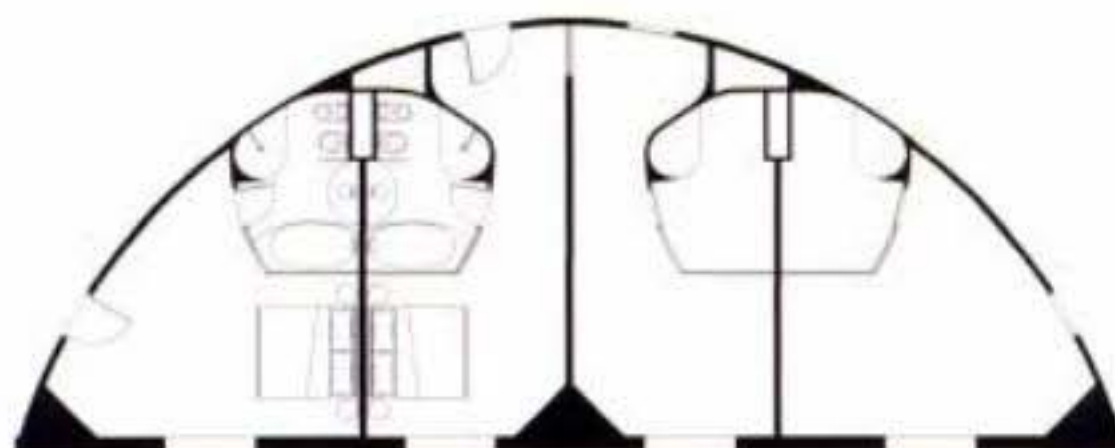


LEFT

Is it a giant fruit segment? Is it a huge ink blotter?
Is it a ship? Is it an ark? No, it's a hotel.

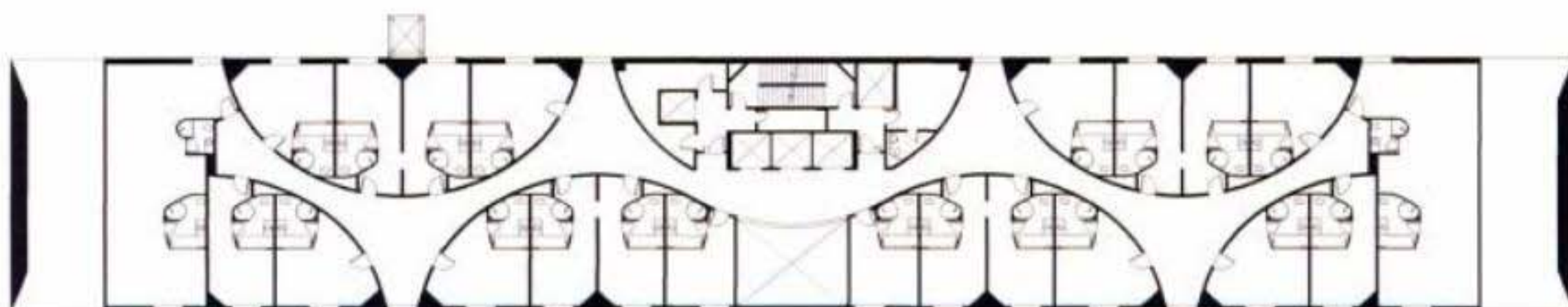
5 ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE





LEFT AND BELOW

The defining semi-circular profile of Hotel Unique can be seen here, repeated in the plan of some of some of its internal spaces.



LEFT

An internal corridor defined by a series of offset, opposed curved walls.

RIGHT

A semicircular room, complete with an organic seat, for relaxing in.

LEFT

The entrance to the Crystal Grotto, which may sound like a Disneyland ride but does in fact manage to incorporate the distinguished touch of Gluckman Mayner in its alder wood portal.



ABOVE

A communal dining table by Royal Custom and three solid wood sculptures by Tucker Robbins adorn the complex's 52.4 metre (172 foot) circulation spine.

LEFT

A dinette in one of Mii amo's bamboo-floored casitas where strong sunlight is diffused as it enters from above the courtyard's high walls.

LEFT

The shower area with its alder wood shelving and individual cubicles, each furnished with a slatted teak platform.



Project Credits

25hours Hotel, Hamburg, Germany

Interior Architecture and Design: 3Meta
Maerklstetter + Fischer; Armin Fischer
(design), Evi Maerklstetter (architect)
Project Team: Evi Märklstetter
Local Architects: Thomas Lau; Mark Hendrik
Bliefferts HPV
Client: Gastwerk Hotel Hamburg GmbH
Bedroom Furniture, Flexible Bar, Wood
Construction in Fire Place: Stonner GmbH
Furniture Supplier: Freiraum
Chairs in Bar and Reception: Zanotta
Sofas in Reception: Living Divani
Lighting Design: Michael
Schmidt – Lichtplaner

Alila Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia

Architects: Denton Corker Marshall, Jakarta
Collaborator: PT Duta Cermat Mandiri
Project Team: Budiman Hendropurnomo
(design principal)
Client: PT Sumbermitra Wisatausaha
Hotel Operator: Alila Hotels
General Contractor: Dimensi
Structural Engineer: PT Wiratman
and Associates
Mechanical and Electrical Engineer: PT
Makesthi Enggal Engineering
Art work (Lobby): Pieter Dietmar
Furniture (Lobby): DCM; Talenta
Custom Furniture (Guest Rooms): Mitra
Luhur Dinamika Lestari
Lighting (Public Spaces): Gema Karya Abadi
Lighting (Guest Rooms): Maestro Lamp

Andel's Hotel, Prague, Czech Republic

Interior Design: Jestico + Whiles
Project Team: John Whiles, James Dilley,
Michelle Le Masurier, François Bertrand,
Johanna Stockhammer, Toby Ware,
Sniez Torbarina
Client: UBM Realitätenentwicklung and
WARIMPEX

Operator: Vienna International
Contractor: PORR Project

Apex City Hotel, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK

Architects and Interior Design: Ian
Springford Architects
Client: Apex Hotels Ltd
Main Contractor: John Mowlem & Co. Plc
Structural Engineer: Sinclair Knight Merz
Services Engineer: RSP Consulting Ltd
Lighting Consultant: Foto-Ma Lighting
Architects and Designers
Quantity Surveyor: Corderoy
Planning Supervisor: Corderoy
Project Services

Clift Hotel, San Francisco, USA

Overall Design: Philippe Starck
Starck Design Studio: Brono Borriore
Client: Ian Schrager Hotels, LLC
President of Development:
Michael Overington
President of Design: Anda Andrei
I.S.H. Design Studio Project Team: Kirstin
Bailey, Masako Fukuoka, Dan Stewart,
Melissa Sison, Lara McKenna, Kelly Behun
I.S.H. Project Coordinator: Cono DiZeo
I.S.H. Design Manager: Larry Traxler
I.S.H. Director of Graphics: Kim Walker
Project Management: Watershed Partners;
Gary Klein, Bill Oster
Construction Manager: Plant Construction
Production Architects: Freebairn-Smith
& Crane; Janet Crane, Javier Medina,
Ian Bevilacqua
Art Installations: Gerard Garouste
Graphic Design: Baron & Baron; Fabien
Baron, Lisa Atkin
Lighting Design: Johnson Schwinghamner;
Clark Johnson
Landscape Design: Madison Cox

Continental, Florence, Italy

Interior Design: Arch. Michele Bönan
Project Team: Arch. Giovanni Lombardi, Arch.
Filippo Cei, Luigi Franco, Anna Maria
Blower, Fiorella Gargani, Christine Hutter
Client: Lungarno Hotels
Work Direction: Arch. Nino Solazzi –
Vivaengineering srl
Construction Management: Cpf SpA
Danish Furniture: MC Selvini
Armchairs: Pierantonio Bonacina snc
Doors and Windows: Badi e Cappelletti
Whitewashing: Pennellotto Restauri srl
Lighting: Estro Illuminazione
Textiles: Blue Home SpA
Stools: Chelini SpA
Furnishings: Tappezeria Cipriani
Bathroom Accessories: Disenia SpA
Sofas and Stools: Verzelloni
Table Lamps: Dessie'srl
Carpentry and Woodwork: Cmm
Wooden Sunblinds: Sunwood

ES Hotel, Rome Italy

Interior Architect: King Roselli Architetti
Project Team: Jeremy King, Riccardo
Roselli (Project Directors); Andrea Ricci,
Claudia Dattilo (Project Architects);
Marina Kavalirek, Riccardo Crespi,
Annalisa Bellettati
Client: C.R. INVEST srl
Design Coordinator: Marzia Midulla Roscioli
Site Supervision: Ing. Nino Bazzi
Contractors: ORION scarl; DICOS SpA
Structural Engineer: Ing. Dario D'innocenzo
AC Plumbing Electrical AC Design: SVA srl
Giuseppe Vergantini
Acoustics Consultant: Biobyte srl
Furniture and Fitting Contractor: Devoto
arredamenti srl; Storie srl
Lighting Equipment Supply: Baldieri srl
Curtain Walling: Edilfai
Glass Parapets in Lobby: Vetraria Federici
Furniture and Fittings: King Roselli

Additional Furniture supplied by: Cappellini,
Vitra, Unifor, Sawaya and Moroni
Marble Venetian Flooring: designed by King
Roselli and supplied by Marmi Menini
Reception Desk: King Roselli
Technological Clouds in the Auditorium:
King Roselli
Bar: King Roselli
Curtains and Blinds: Louverdrape
Rugs: Kasthall
Audi and Video Suppliers: Sedico 84
Sanitary Ware: Giulio Cappellini and
Ludovica e Roberto Palomba for
Ceramica Flaminia
Sink: Montecatini 1933 designed by Gio
Ponti and supplied by Rapsel
Jacuzzi Bathtubs: supplied by
Albatros e Duravit
Taps: Vola by Arne Jacobsen supplied
by Rapsel

ESO Hotel, Cerro Paranal, Chile

Architects: Auer + Weber + Architekten
Project Team: Philipp Auer (project
architect); Dominik Schenkirz, Robert
Giessler, Michael Krüger, Charles Martin
Client: ESO European Southern Observatory
Outdoor Facilities: Gesswein,
Henkel + Partner
Engineering: Mayr + Ludescher (structural);
HL-Technik AG (mechanical); HL-Technik
(electrical); Schneidewendt (kitchen)
Lighting Design: Werner Lampl, Diessen

Four Seasons Hotel, Tokyo, Japan

Interior Design: Yabu Pushelberg
Project Team: Glenn Pushelberg, George
Yabu, Christopher Koroknay, Lizette
Viloria, Kelly Buffy, Ayako Sugino, Anthony
Tey, Paul Pudjo, Minh Duong, Polly
Chan, Sunny Leung, James Robertson,
Christina Gustavs
Project Architects: Nikken Sekkei; George

Kuromado (project head); Tetsuji Yuki
(project architect)
Architect of Record: Nikken Sekki, Takanaka
= PCP Design Team
Client: Pacific Century Cyber Works
General Contractor: PCP Group Lighting:
Cooley Monato
Engineers: PCP Group
Interior Finishes: PCP Group (acoustical
ceilings and suspension grid)
Cabinetwork and Custom Woodwork: Yabu
Pushelberg, Decca, Erik Cabinets
Wallcoverings, Panelling, Special Surfacing,
Floor and Wall Tiles: PCP Group
Carpet: Tai Ping
Raised Flooring: PCP Group
Reception Furniture: YP; PCP
Fixed Seating: Decca
Chairs: Knoll, Palumbo, Pucci, Louis Interiors;
B&B Italia; Void; Hickory
Tables: Decca, Minotti
Upholstery: McGuire, Ralph Lauren, Home,
John Saladino
Downlights: Eurolight
Task Lighting: Tango
Plumbing: Dornbracht

The Gran Hotel Domine Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain

Design Concept: Javier Mariscal;
Fernando Salas
Architect: Iñaki Aurrekoetxea
Client: Silken Hotels
Project Management: Vizcaina
de Edificaciones SA
Graphic Design: Estudio Mariscal
Acoustics: Higini Arau
Fossil Cyprus Tree: Taller Pere Casanovas
Carpentry: Jaume Carré Sánchez
Metal Work: Talleres Colmenero
Sign Posting: Roura Cevasa
Ceramics: Jorge Fernández

The Grove, Hertfordshire, England, UK

Interior Design: Fox Linton Associates;
Martin Hulbert (hotel interior); Collett
Zarzycki (The Stables, Sequoia, the spa
and fitness studios)
Architects: Fitzroy Robinson
Extension Architects: Scott Brownrigg Taylor
Client: Ralph Trustees Ltd
Extension Construction: Galliford
Try Construction
Spa and Stable Construction: Kier Southern
Project Management: MACE; John Betty
Planning Supervisors: Faber Maunsell
Mechanical and Electrical Contractors: TBA
(Troop Bywater & Anders)
Lighting: Equation
Landscapers: M.J. Abbotts
Soft Landscaping: Willoughby
Ironmongery: First Choice

Harts Hotel, Nottingham, England, UK

Architects: Marsh; Grochowski
Project Team: Mike Askey, Dan Greenway,
Anke Lawrence, Julian Marsh, Mike Reade
Interior Design: Hambleton Decorating Ltd;
Stefa Hart
Client: Hart Hambleton PLC; Tim Hart
Main Contractor: Marriott Construction
Services Contractor: F. G. Skerrett Ltd
Structural Engineer: Price Myers; Steve
Wickman, Dan Wright
Services Engineers: D.H. Squire; Tony Harris
Quantity Surveyor: W.T. Partnership; Stuart
Bates, Peter Willows
Landscape Design: Neil Hewetson
Catering Design: Gratham Winch
Planning Supervisor: Marsh Grochowski;
Mike Askey
Aluminium Windows: Bonam and Berry
Steelwork: Cavill Fabrications
PC Concrete: Bison
Joinery: Winston Joinery
Furniture: Pierre Frey
Signage: Merrill Brown

Flooring: Treamar
 Painting and Decoration: DKN Decorating
 Glazing: Solarglas
 Suppliers: Allgoods (ironmongery); 'O'
 Windows (windows and doors); Domus
 Tiles (tiling); Simas Luna, Villeroy and Boch,
 Olympus, Kaldewei (sanitary ware);
 Gaskells Broadloom (carpet); Concept Tiling
 (stone flooring); Atkinson and Kirby
 (timber flooring); Dernleys (blinds);
 Artemide, Marlin, Thorn, Crescent (lighting)

HausRheinsberg Hotel am See, Rheinsberg, Germany

Interior Design: Mahmoudieh Design
 Project Team: Yasmine Mahmoudieh,
 Albino Cipriani, Ingeborg Blank and
 Heidemarie Schütz
 Architects: Dr. Pawlik + Partner Gbr
 Project Team: Herr Mews, Frau Bayat,
 Herr Lemmel
 Client: Furst Donnersmarck; Guidotto Dr
 Graf Henckel Furst von Donnersmarck;
 Herr Schmidt (project leader)
 Consultants: RWM Hotel Consult;
 Gastronomie Planung + Innovation GmbH;
 Büro Geralt GmbH; Furst Donnersmarck

HI Hotel, Nice, France

Concept: Matali Crasset with Philippe
 Chapelet, Patrick Elouardghi
 Interior Design, Decoration and Graphic Art:
 Matali Crasset with the assistance of
 Christophe Thelisson, Oscar Diaz &
 Francis Fichot
 Executive Architect: Frédéric Ducic
 Client: HI Hotel; Joerg Boehler
 General Contractor: Philippe Chapelet,
 Patrick Elouardghi, HCF sarl
 Concrete Construction: Jean-Marc Lasry,
 Lasry & Moro Engineers
 Bathroom Facilities and Fittings:
 Agape, Aquamass

Glass: Miroiterie Nicoise, Glasstini
 Dinner Service: Manufacture de Monaco
 Furniture: Modular
 Furniture/Woodwork: Demichelis, Atelier
 de la Reinière, Atelier Virginie Ecorce
 Lighting Consultant: Jacques Bobroff
 Metalwork: L'Univers de l'Aluminium
 Leatherwork/Carpets/Tapestry:
 Domeau & Pérès
 Resins: Sept Résines, Mediterra Design
 Sound: SES Giraudon
 Hardener: Benoît B

Hotel Claska, Tokyo, Japan

Architects: Intentionallies (guest rooms);
 Urban Design Systems Co. Ltd
 (customized guest rooms, gallery, office,
 business centre)
 Client: Urban Design Systems Inc
 Contractors: Opus Design Studio Inc;
 Cosmos More Co. Ltd
 Graphic Collaboration: Tycoon Graphics
 Art Installation: Tomato
 Furniture Direction: T.C.K.W. Co. Ltd

Hotel Habita, Mexico City, Mexico

Architects: Taller de Enrique Norton
 Arquitectos SC (TEN Arquitectos)
 Project Team: Enrique Norton, Bernardo
 Gómez-Pimienta Aarón Hernández, Sergio
 Nuñez, Francisco Pardo, Julio Amezcua,
 Hugo Sánchez, Claudia Marquina, Carlos
 López, Martine Paquin, Adriana Díaz,
 Rubén Garnica, Miguel Ríos
 Client: Hotel Habita SA de CV; Carlos
 Couturier, Moises Micha, Jaime Micha,
 Rafael Micha
 General Contractor: Construcciones
 Gavaladón
 Engineer: Colinas de Buen
 Window Consultant: Val & Val
 Graphic Design: Ricardo Salas
 Art: Jan Hendrix

Model: Miguel Ríos
 Computer Model: Jean Michel Colonnier

Hotel Josef, Prague, Czech Republic

Architects and Interior Design: Eva Jiricna
 Architects Ltd
 Project Team: Eva Jiricna, Duncan Webster,
 Gabriel Alexander, Christine Humphreys
 Collaborator: site administration, s.r.o.;
 Petr Vagner
 Client: Hastalska, a.s.
 Production, Electrical and Mechanical
 Drawings: g:projekt, s.r.o.
 Project Management: GI-ckner Praha, s.r.o.
 General Contractor: Swietelsky
 Stavebni, s.r.o.
 Electrical and Mechanical Work:
 EZ Praha, a.s.
 Lighting: Thorn Lighting CS, s.r.o.
 Glass Bathrooms and Tables: Cekov
 umelecke zamecnictvi a pasirstvi, s.r.o.
 Exterior and Interior Shading and Blinds:
 Cebing-Miller, s.r.o.
 Interior Furniture: Snora spol. s.r.o.
 Glass Staircase, Bar and Reception: Pavel
 Ruzicka – Artefakt
 Curtains: Alena Kuchtova – Anna + A.

Hotel Unique, São Paulo, Brazil

Architect: Ruy Ohtake
 Project Team: Ruy Ohtake, Alfred Talaat,
 Félix Araújo, Nancy Marques, Marcelo
 Jordão Armentano
 Interior Design: João Armentano
 Construction: Método
 Acoustical Engineer: Acústica Engenharia;
 Johnson's Controls
 Consultants: Alphametal (Eximax); Algrad
 Esquadrias e Fachadas Especiais Ltda; Avec
 Verre Design Produtos Especiais Ltda
 Window Manufacturer: Santa Marina Vitrage
 Ltda; Penha Importadora e Distribuidora
 de Vidros Ltda; Pilkington

Garden: Gilberto Elkis
 Lighting: Ginter Parschalk
 Structure: J lio Kassoy e M rio Franco
 (concrete); Jorge Kurken Kurkdjian e Jorge
 Zaven Kurkdjian (metalwork)
 Foundation: Portela Alarcon
 Installations and Air Conditioning: MHA

**Ice Hotel Quebec-Canada,
 Quebec, Canada**

Design: Ice Hotel Quebec-Canada Inc
 Project Team: Denis Cantin (production
 director); Serge P loquin (artistic
 director); Jacques Desbois (CEO)
 Client: Ice Hotel Quebec-Canada Inc; CEO:
 Jacques Desbois
 Themed Suite: Dan Hanganu
 Sculptors: Michel Lepire, Marc Lepire,
 Louis Lavoie

Ku'Damm 101, Berlin, Germany

Art Direction/Overall Strategy, Design and
 Concept: kessler und kessler
 Interior Architects (Project Management):
 Dipl.-Ing. Architekt Ascan Tesdorpf
 Architects: Eyl, Weitz, W rmle & Partner
 Architects – Redevelopment: Kadel-
 Quick-Scheib
 Client: HOTAKA GmbH & Co. KG
 Hotel Operator: Bleibtreu Services GmbH
 Design Room Furniture: Lemongras Design
 Studio; Gruppe-RE
 Design Public Areas for kessler und kessler:
 Vogt + Weizenegger
 Garden and Landscape Design: L tzow7

Le Meridien, Minneapolis, USA

Interior Design: Yabu Pushelberg
 Project Team: George Yabu, Glenn
 Pushelberg, Mary Mark, Reg Andrade,
 Anson Lee, Eduardo Figueredo, Cherie
 Stinson, Aldington Coombs, Mika

Nishikaze, Marc Gaudet, Alex Edward,
 Kevin Storey, Christina Gustavs,
 Sunny Leung
 Architects: Antunovich Associates
 Project Team: Yvonne Golds, Alistair McCaw,
 Dan Whetstone, Julie Chambers
 Client: James J. Graves, Graves Hospitality
 Contractor: David Stark PCL/Plant
 Purchasing Firm: Leonard Parker Company
 Consultant: A/V Consultant, DMX Music
 Lighting: Cooley Monato, TPL Marketing
 Engineering: Harris Mechanical Hunt Electric
 Stone Throughout: Coverings Etc Inc
 Lighting Throughout: TPL Marketing
 Wallcovering Throughout:
 Metro Wallcoverings
 Leather Ottomans/Benches (Ground Floor):
 Kai-Leather Product Design
 Wall Finish (Lobby Bar): Capriccio Arts
 Acrylic Chairs/Cocktail Tables: Les Meubles
 Saint-Damase Inc
 Concrete Cocktail Tables: Atelier Vierkant
 Art Work (Ground Floor): Umomo –
 artist: Dennis Lin
 Floor Lanterns: Abramczyk Studio
 Concrete Artwork (Lobby Bar):
 Piet Stockman
 5th Floor Artwork: Paul Houseberg
 Artwork Behind Reception Desk:
 Hirotoshi Sawada

The Library Hotel, New York, USA

Architects: The Stephen B. Jacobs Group, P.C.
 Project Team: Stephen B. Jacobs, FAIA
 (project architect); Herbert E Weber Jr,
 AIA (supervising principal); Sarit Shaanani
 (architectural project manager)
 Interior Design: Andi Pepper Interior Design
 Project Team: Shufei Wu (project manager)
 Client: H.K. Hotels; Henry Kallan
 Main Contractor: Levine Builders

Malmaison, Birmingham, England, UK

Interior Design: Jestico + Whiles
 Project Team: John Whiles, Sniez Torbarina,
 Eoin Keating, Tony Ling, Fran ois Bertrad,
 Johanna Stockhammer, David Archer,
 Joanna Foster
 Architects: Ferrier Crawford
 Client: Malmaison Ltd
 Main Contractor: HBG
 Structural Engineer: Curtains Consulting
 Engineers
 Services Engineer: Buro Happold
 Quantity Surveyor: Baker Hollingsworth
 Associates Ltd

Mii amo, Sedona, USA

Architects: Gluckman Maynar Architects
 Project Team: Dana Tang, Greg Yang (project
 architects); Marwan Al Sayed, Mark
 Fiedler, Carolyn Foug, Alex Hurst, Antonio
 Palladino, Nina Seirafi, Michael Sheridan,
 Julie Torres Moskovitz, Dean Young
 Client: Sedona Resort Management
 Contractor and Reception Desk: Linthicum
 Engineers: Rudrow & Berry Inc (structural);
 Clark Engineers (SW, MEP); Shephard-
 Wesnitzer (civil)
 Consultants: Ten Eyck Landscape Architects
 (landscape); Sylvia Sepieli (spa); Water
 Technology (pool)
 Masonry: Mexican fired adobe brick
 EIFS: Sto Corp
 Venetian-style Plaster: ARD, Lime
 Rasato Plaster
 Elastomeric (TPO) Roofing: Carlisle
 Syntec Systems
 Aluminium Windows and Doors: Western
 Insulated Glass; Brite-Vue
 Skylights: Therm-O-Weld System;
 Velux-America

Miróhotel, Bilbao, Spain

Architect: Carmen Abad
 Interior Design: Antonio Miró with
 Pilar Libano
 Client: Mazzarredo 77
 Project Management: Lantec Estudios
 y Proyectos

myhotel Chelsea, London, England, UK

Architects: Project Orange
 Client: MyHotels: Owner –
 Andy Thrasyvoulou
 Main Contractor: Cathedral Contracts
 Project Management: Keytask
 Quantity Surveyor: Gardiner and Theobald
 Mechanical and Electrical Contractor: MCA
 Casegoods: Andrew Thompson

Parkhotel, Hall, Austria

Architects: Henke und Schreieck Architekten
 Project Team: Dieter Henke, Christian
 Farcher (project managers); Daniela
 Ferrigni, Ralf Rüssel, Felix Siegrist
 Client: Stadtwerke Hall in Tirol GmGH
 Site Management: BMO Baumanagement
 Oswald & Partner
 Structural Consultant: Dipl. Ing. Manfred
 Gmeiner; Dipl. Ing. Martin Haferl
 Environmental Service: DI Walter Prause
 Mechanical Engineer: Tivoli Plan Planungs-
 und Baubetreuungs-GmbH
 Electrical Engineer: Eidelpes
 Elektrotechnik GmbH
 Façade: Starmann Metallbau GmbH
 Roof: Walter Ploberger Isolierungen GmbH
 Landscape Architects: Auböck & Kárász
 Artwork/Light Sculpture: Hans Weigand
 Signs: Mag. Ingeborg Kumpfmüller
 Lighting Concept: conceptlicht GmbH
 Lighting System: HALOTECH Lichtfabrik
 Elevators: Otis GmbH

Pershing Hall, Paris, France

Interior Design: Andrée Putman sarl
 Project Team: Andrée Putman, Elliott Barnes
 (principals); Jérôme Clynckemaillie (senior
 designer); Linda Andrieux (stylist)
 Architects: Richard Martinet Architecture
 Client: LA Partners
 Contractors for the Fit Out: Duriez
 Agencement (rooms); Pilot'ag
 Agencement (lobby/bar/restaurant)
 Lighting Consultant: Geoff Wild –
 Extreme Latitudes
 Landscape: Patrick Blanc – Garden Wall

Radisson SAS Hotel, Glasgow, Scotland, UK

Architects: Gordon Murray + Alan Dunlop
 Architects
 Project Team: Gordon Murray, Alan Dunlop,
 Lucy Andrew, Maggie Barlow, Alison
 Gallagher, James Liebman, Andrew Miller,
 Karen Millar, Rory Olcayto, Stacey Philips
 Client: MWB Argyle Street Ltd
 Main Contractor: HBG Construction
 Contractors: New Acoustics, Kevan Shaw
 Lighting Design
 Quantity Surveyor: Thomas Adamson
 Structural Engineer: Blyth and Blyth
 Services Engineer: Blyth and Blyth
 Copper Cladding: KME/TECU; John Fulton
 Curtain Wall and Glazing: Henshaws
 Slate Cladding: Stirling Stone
 Planar System: Pilkingtons
 Roofs: Miller Roofing; Sarnafil
 Timber Cladding: Brynzeel/Multipanel
 Glass Flooring: Haran Glass
 Quarella Floors: CTD
 Joiner: Jamieson Contracting
 Mechanical Subcontractor: FES
 Electrical Subcontractor: ELG
 Lighting: Terkan
 Bathroom Pods: RB Farquer
 Fire Protection: Kenstallen
 Ceilings: Soundtex
 Fitting Out: Elmwood

Ritz-Carlton, Miami, USA

Architects: Nichols Brosch Sandoval
 & Associates Inc
 Designers: Howard Design Group
 Client: Lowenstein's Lionstone Hotels and
 Resorts; Flag Luxury Properties, LLC;
 Paul Kanavos

**The Sheraton Frankfurt Hotel,
Frankfurt, Germany**

Interior Design: United Designers Europe Ltd
 Project Team: Keith Hobbs, Limzi Coppick,
 Ed Price, Chris Johnston, Hildegard Pax
 Architects: JSK International
 Client: Hospitality Europe Services Ltd
 Operator: Sheraton Management GmbH
 Project Management: Hanscomb GmbH
 Main Contractor: Lindner GmbH
 Services Design: IB Paulus
 Lighting Design: Into Lighting
 Designs Limited

Soho House Hotel, New York, USA

Interior Design: Studioilse
 Creative Director: Ilse Crawford
 Project Team: Sue Parker (Senior Designer);
 Many Lax (Project Manager)
 Architects: Harman Lee Jablin
 Client: Soho House New York LLC
 Structural Engineer: James Ruderman
 Offices LLP

UNA Hotel, Florence, Italy

Architect: Fabio Novembre
 Project team: Carlo Formisano, Lorenzo de
 Nicola, Giuseppina Flor, Ramon Karges
 Client: UNA Hotels and Resorts
 Main Contractor: Tino Sana srl
 General Contractor: C.P.F
 Electricity: Consorzio Artim
 Air Conditioning: Gino Battaglini
 Floorcovering (Hall): Pastellone Veneziano

by Collezioni Ricordi
 Special Structures (Hall): Loop by Tino Sana
 covered with Opus Romano by Bisazza
 Lighting (Hall): Modular, Chandelier by Nucleo
 Seating (Hall): AND sofa Fabio Novembre
 for Cappellini
 Floorcovering (Restaurant): Opus Romano
 by Bisazza
 Wallcovering (Restaurant): MDF by Marotte
 Special Structures (Restaurant): Tino Sana
 (tables); Zella (stained glass)
 Lighting (Restaurant): iGuzzini
 Furniture (Restaurant): Lensvelt
 Special Structures (Conference Room):
 Curved wall by Tino Sana
 Lighting (Conference Room): Modular, RGB
 System by Zumtobel
 Furniture (Conference Room): Fritz Hansen
 Floorcoverings (Rooms): Tino Sana, laminate
 by Locatelli, Mosaic by Bisazza
 Wallcoverings (Rooms): Leather by Cuoiom
 Lighting (Rooms): iGuzzini, Fibre Optics by
 Fort Fibre Ottiche
 Furniture (Rooms): La Palma and Cappellini
 Floorcovering (Corridors): gress by
 Cotto d'Este
 Wallcovering (Corridors): Laminate
 by Locatelli
 Special Structures (Corridors): MDF Shapes
 and Frames: Tino Sana
 Lighting (Corridors): Modular; iGuzzini

Vigilius Mountain Resort, Meran, Italy

Design: Matto Thun
 Collaborating Architects: Arch. Bruno
 Franchi, Arch. Renato Precoma, arch.
 Ulrich Pfannschmidt
 Collaborating Interior Design: Arch. Christina
 Von Berg, Arch. Gioia Gaio, Arch.
 Dorothee Maier
 Local Architect: Arch. Harry Husel
 Client: Dr. Schär GmbH
 Lighting: Arch. Simon Fumagalli
 Graphic Support: Astrid Kampowsky,

Michaela Dehne, Sonia Micheli
 Services Engineer: GMI with Studio Langer
 Floor Covering: Berlinger Holzbau (larch);
 Grünig; Erwin Flesenbau
 Walls Covering: Berlinger Holzbau (larch);
 Glas marthe (glass); Martin Rauch (raw
 clay); Merotto Milani
 Ceiling Systems: Berlinger Holzbau
 Lighting/Lighting Accessories: Berker, Flos,
 Zumtobel Staff
 Furniture: B&B Italia, Baxter, Gufler,
 Gruber, Orizzonti, Maxalto, Merotto
 Milani, Moroso
 Textiles: Caravane Paris, C&C Milano,
 Creation Baumann, Kinnasand, Kvadrat,
 Edmoni Petit, Frette, Rubelli, Soble Italia,
 Steiner, Tollgate

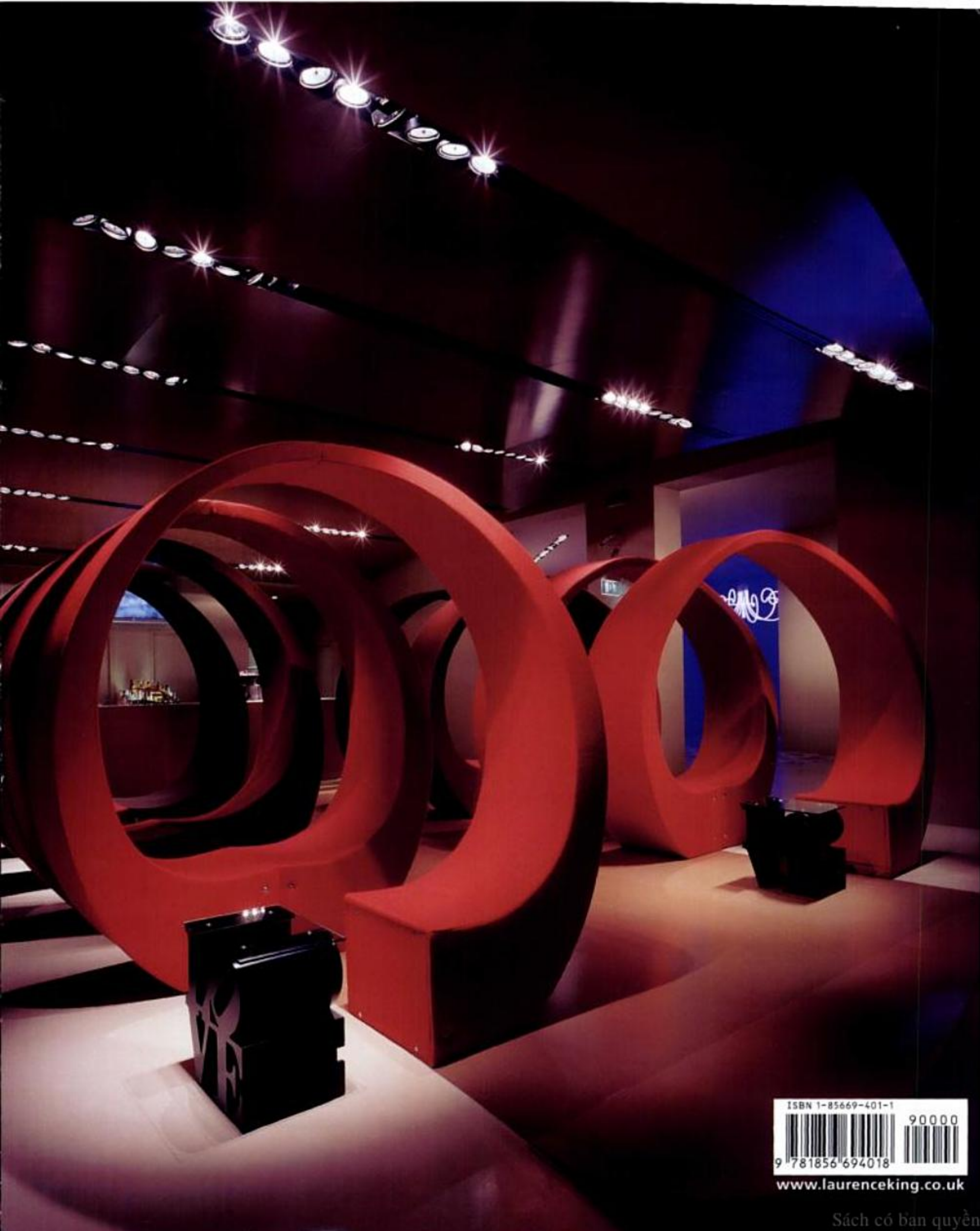
W Hotel, Mexico City, Mexico

Architects of Record: KMD – Mexico (Kaplan
 McLaughlin Diaz)
 Project Team: Carlos Fernández del Valle,
 Juan Diego Pérez-Vargas; Maca Zeballos,
 Luis Bayuelo, Jesús Domínguez, Antonio
 Guzmán, Fernanda Ibarrola, Erica
 Krayner, Gabriela Martín del Campo,
 Vicente Peralta
 Interior Design: Studio GAIA
 Project Team: Ilan Waisbrod, Anurag Nema
 Client: Starwood Hotels & Resorts
 Project and Construction Management,
 Value Engineering: ADIPPSA S.A. de C.V.;
 Eng. Enrique Ross
 Structural Engineer: BETT Construcciones;
 Eng Amadeo Betancourt
 Plumbing and Mechanical Engineer:
 Sociedad Hidromecánica; Eng Sergio
 Herrera Mundo
 Electrical Engineer: Electrical System, voice
 & data, CCTV, AMTV Arellano Ingeniería;
 Eng. Alfredo Arellano
 HVAC Engineer: IACSA; Eng. José Luis Trillo
 Interior Lighting Design: Johnson
 Schwinghammer; Clark Johnson

Exterior Lighting Design: Starco Mexico;
 Christian Pertz
 Kitchen and Food Service Consultant:
 DIPREC S.A. de C.V.; Eng. Eduardo
 Gómez Ceballos
 Concrete Floors and Stones: Diseño Suco
 SA de CV
 Macedonia Marble for Rooms: La Casa
 Del Cantero
 Interior Glazing: Cristacurva
 Wood Case and Custom Made Furniture:
 Grupo Hagan

W New York – Times Square, New York, USA

Interior Design: Yabu Pushelberg
 Project Team: George Yabu, Glenn Pushelberg
 (principals); Mary Mack, Reg Andrade,
 Anson Lee, Marcia MacDonald, Cherie
 Stinson, Aldington Coombs, Alex Edward,
 Eduardo Figuerero, Marc Gaudet, Mike
 Nishikaze, Sunny Leung, Kevin Storey
 Architects of Record: Brennan Beer
 Gorman Architects
 Project Team: Mario LaGuardia, Kevin Brown
 Client: Starwood Hotels & Resorts
 Worldwide
 Lighting Designer: L'Observatoire; Hervé
 Descotte (principal)
 Wall Covering, Wall Finishes: Metro
 Wallcoverings; Moss & Lam; Excelsior
 Cabinetry, Millwork: Benchmark Furniture;
 Pancor Industries; Erik Cabinets
 Paints, Stains: Sherwin Williams
 Flooring: stone, Tile International;
 Sullivan Source
 Lighting: Abramczyk Studio; Baldinger;
 Color Kinetics; Eurolite; Sistemalux; TPL
 Marketing: Unit Five Manufacturing
 Furniture: Knoll; Minima; Pancor



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